

OZO-MEKURI NDIMELE (Ed.)

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# LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT:

GLOBALISATION & THE  
FATE OF MINORITY  
LANGUAGES IN NIGERIA

*A Festschrift for Appolonia Uzoaku Okwudishu*



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**Language Endangerment: Globalisation & the Fate of Minority  
Languages in Nigeria**

*A Festschrift for Appolonia Uzoaku Okwudishu*

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## Dedication

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**This book is dedicated to**  
**ALL LOVERS OF LANGUAGE**

## Preface

**T**his book is a commemorative volume. It is the 12<sup>th</sup> edition in the *Nigerian Linguists Festschrift Series*. So far, we have done a dozen, and therefore, need to congratulate ourselves on this unprecedented feat. No other subject association in Nigeria has been so productive, not minding the harsh realities of the day and unfair working environment that academics in this part of the globe are confronted with.

The majority of the papers here were selected from the presentations at the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Linguistic Association of Nigerian (CLAN) which was held at the Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria. In this book are also a few papers selected from the much that the LOC of the 26<sup>th</sup> CLAN which was held at the University of Ibadan could oblige us.

The 27<sup>th</sup> CLAN was held to celebrate the spectacular achievements of another female giant in our field, Professor (Mrs.) Appolonia Uzoaku Okwudishu of the University of Abuja, Nigeria. Hence, this book is devoted to her as our own little way to salute her giant strides in her career and to appreciate her immense contributions to the growth of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria.

Professor Okwudishu is the foremost female General Secretary of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria – a position she held for two consecutive and marvelously productive tenures. She has held many other administration positions, including serving as the first female Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration) of her university.

The title of this book derives from the theme of the 27<sup>th</sup> CLAN, which is “Language Endangerment: Globalisation and the Fate of Minority Languages in Nigeria”. A sizeable number of the papers here address the major theme of the conference, while the balance address various aspects of Nigerian linguistics, languages, communication, and literature. Papers on language endangerment and language revitalisation strategies for safeguarding the vanishing indigenous tongues of Nigeria took a centre stage in the book.

We have enjoyed the goodwill of a number of persons and institutions in putting this book together, and therefore, should naturally appreciate those whose contributions readily call to mind. We acknowledge with gratitude the support we received from the Vice-Chancellors and members of the Local Organising Committees of the University of Ibadan and Benue State University, Markudi, for facilitating the hosting of the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> CLAN, respectively.

The President of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria, Professor (Mrs.) Chinyere Ohiri-Aniche, is also appreciated for ensuring that we received the papers from the 27<sup>th</sup> CLAN soon after the conference. This effort facilitated our early commencement of the assessment of the papers. That we were able to receive some papers from the LOC of the 26<sup>th</sup> CLAN, to further enrich the contents of this volume, is as a result of her intervention.

**Professor Ozo-mekuri Ndimele**

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# **1. Language Documentation: A Dependable Linguistic Practice for Minimizing the Effects of Endangerment on Languages in Nigeria**

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## **1. Introduction**

The motivation for the present paper was driven by a number of observations, concerns and convictions, namely:

First, my personal observation that most researchers on/in Nigerian languages studying especially in tertiary institutions in Nigeria no longer do fieldwork before gathering data anyhow, and by whatever means for analysis and/or description in their M.A./M.ED Dissertations, journal articles and even PhD Theses.

Second, the conviction that in terms of the criteria - language development, linguistic documentation and description - most languages in Nigeria are endangered, and that even the so-called fairly highly documented and analyzed Nigerian languages, including the big three - Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba - cannot compete favourably with well-researched European and Asian languages (see also Omachonu, 2012, Heine & Nurse, 2000:5).

Third, the fact that extant literature on language endangerment is replete with the following disturbing and/or frightening predictions, such as:

- a. A language dies somewhere in the world every two weeks (Emenanjo 2010).
- b. In the last 500 years, half of the languages of the world have disappeared (Hill 1978).
- c. '3000 languages, about half of the 6,528 languages spoken today will fall in disuse by the end of the next century possibly within the next 20 years'. *Awake Magazine* (April 8, 1999:29)
- d. Only about ten percent (10%) of the present languages in the world may survive the 21<sup>st</sup> century to welcome the 22<sup>nd</sup> century (Kuju 1999).
- e. '... in the next 50-100 years, 90% of the languages of Africa will be extinct' (Egbokhare 2004:6).
- f. Perhaps, only the top ten languages of the world (Mandarin Chinese, English, Spanish, Hindi, Arabic, Portuguese, Bengali, Russian, Japanese, and German) are safe languages in the world today (Emenanjo 2010:8)

Fourth, the conviction that a language could become endangered, weakened, become moribund, dies and disappears. And then the concern that when a language is lost, the entire people, their culture and everything that makes them a 'unique entity' are lost. A whole civilization is lost (cf. Gippert, Himmelman & Mosel, 2006).

Lastly, the conviction that if a language is properly and comprehensively documented, even when it dies and disappears, the records remain; and such records could be used for meaningful linguistic description subsequently.

Against the backdrop of the above observations, concerns and convictions, the specific objectives of the paper are, among others, to:

- a. Briefly examine language endangerment in Nigeria generally and in the north in particular: the degree, the dimensions and the reasons for such endangerment especially the worst-case scenarios.
- b. Attempt to discuss how practically oriented documentation of Nigerian languages could help minimize the negative effects of endangerment on the languages for the purposes of language development and preservation.

In what follows therefore, for the purposes of orderliness, smooth flow of thought and coherent presentation, the paper is structured, thus: (2.) The Language Situation in Nigeria, (3.) Language Endangerment in Nigeria: meaning, the degree, the dimensions, effects and the reasons for such endangerment especially the worst-case scenarios, (4.) Reversing the Trend: Practical approaches to language documentation as means of minimizing the negative effects of endangerment on Nigerian languages, and (5.) Conclusion and Recommendations.

## **2. The Language Situation in Nigeria: A Brief Review**

Nigeria is known for its extreme linguistic diversity with multiplicity of languages whose exact number cannot be given with a high degree of certainty. The various figures given to represent the estimated number of languages spoken in Nigeria include: Tiffen (1968) = 150 languages, Bamgbose (1971) = about 400 languages, Hansford et al. (1976) = 394 languages, Crozier & Blench (1992) = 520 languages, Blench (2011) = 550 languages. As it were, these were mere estimates which in most cases were not based on comprehensive survey and accurate statistics except Hansford et al. (1976) which was based on a comprehensive survey conducted by Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) in Nigeria (see Omachonu 2012:11 for some of the factors responsible for lack of exact/accurate language statistics in Nigeria).

As it is, Nigeria alone houses a quarter of Africa's languages. Of the about 2,035 languages spoken in Africa (representing  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the world's languages) (Heine & Nurse eds. 2000) and of the approximately 1050 languages spoken in West Africa, about 550 are spoken in Nigeria (Blench 2011). And of the four language phyla (families) in Africa, with the exception of **Khoisan**, three are represented in Nigeria, namely: **Niger-Congo**, **Afroasiatic** and **Nilo-Saharan**.

Based on population and relative importance, indigenous Nigerian languages have been categorized into major, minor (main) and/or small group languages (SGLs) with over 400 (80%) classified as SGLs (See Bamgbose 1992). English (the colonial language) remains the official language in Nigeria even long after independence. It is to be noted, however, that in addition to English, French has been recognized as the second official language in Nigeria since 1996 (see Igboanusi & Pütz, 2008). For wider communication and for the purposes of communication across one's ethnic group, English and Nigerian Pidgin are used. Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are, to an extent, used as languages of wider communication since they are used as lingua franca by speakers of other languages in addition to English and Nigerian Pidgin in their respective regions. Whereas **Arabic** is used in specific contexts of Islamic worship and Quranic pedagogy

(especially in northern Nigeria & some parts of SW states- Oyo, Ogun, and Lagos, **French** has remained a language of international diplomacy with the Francophone neighbouring countries such as Benin, Togo, Cameroon and Niger. In addition to being recognized as a second official language in Nigeria since 1996, French is equally taught in secondary schools and tertiary institutions in Nigeria. At present, especially with UBE provision for French as one of the compulsory subjects, the teaching of French is gaining ground in both primary and nursery schools in Nigeria.

The indigenous languages especially the ‘majors’ are, to an extent, used in the field of education as media of instruction and also taught as subjects or studied as courses in some higher institutions especially in the states where the languages are spoken. They are also used in the media. At present, none of the indigenous languages is generally accepted and used as a national language, i.e. as a symbol of the country’s nationality or national identity (partly due to lack of scientific development and standardization to cope with the new functions). Apart from the dominance of English over all the indigenous languages in Nigeria, a continuous source of language conflict is the somewhat suspicious relationship between the major and non-major languages due to the fear of linguistic imperialism and consequently political domination especially as expressed by speakers of small group languages.

### **3. Language Endangerment in Nigeria: Meaning, the Degree/Dimensions, Effects and the Reasons**

A language is said to be endangered when a particular speech community finds itself in a situation where its language (the means/medium of all round expression) faces degradation and threat of extinction. In other words, when the survival of a linguistic system or language is threatened and weakened; realistically, it is endangered. UNESCO LVI (cf. Emenanjo 2010:16-17) gave the following international evaluating yardsticks for diagnosing or measuring language endangerment:

- a. absolute number of fluent and committed speakers,
- b. proportion of speakers within the total population,
- c. shifts in domain of actual use,
- d. materials for language use and literacy,
- e. governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies including official status and use,
- f. interaction and social effects between language attitudes and policies,
- g. nature, type and quality of language documentation.

In Nigeria, language endangerment is no longer a mere strong possibility but a stark reality. Most languages in Nigeria suffer varying degrees of threats suggested by the use of certain adjectives in the literature: *receding, disadvantaged, deprived, disuse, weakened, unsafe, sickly, moribund, dying, disappearing, extinct and dead languages*. A critical look at the language endangerment scenarios in Nigeria would reveal the following two broad dimensions to it:

- 
- a. Language Endangerment due to small number of speakers, language contacts and languages in competition within bilingual/multilingual milieu (e.g. the presence of a predator).
  - b. Language Endangerment due to lack of scientific development and linguistic description or study of the languages (this includes the nature, type, quantity and quality of language documentation and description, materials for language use and literacy, etc.).

The combine effects of these two dimensions of language endangerment in Nigeria have created room for the following situations of linguistic loss including the worst-case scenarios (to be discussed shortly):

- a. Shift to the language of wider communication especially English, Pidgin and/or Hausa (in the North) often as a consequence of settlement in the urban centres (rural-urban migration).
- b. Shift to the dominant regional language, e.g. Hausa in the North, Yoruba in the West, and Igbo in the South.
- c. Vocabulary loss without shift: most of the languages in Nigeria suffer this as could be seen in the degree of borrowing from English, Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba.

Therefore, in concrete terms, most Nigerian languages are endangered in more ways than one, namely:

- a. No generally accepted literary standard.
- b. No dictionary and no comprehensive reference grammar.
- c. Officially, the languages are not taught at primary and secondary school levels, let alone the tertiary.
- d. There are hardly standard linguistic materials and textbooks for language teaching and learning except dated primers and catechisms or religious instruction books written when most of the languages had no approved orthography.
- e. There are negligibly few native speaker-linguists with the necessary/required linguistic training with which to advance the study of the languages in terms of documentation and description.
- f. Indigenous names, numerals and other valuable contents of the languages are fast disappearing. Children and younger people hardly know how to count in the local languages. Even adults, mix up codes with English and/or Hausa when they count money and other objects in the languages.
- g. Many children of literate/educated Nigerian parents, both at home and abroad, no longer speak the languages and, unfortunately, most of them now bear English names and names from foreign religions alien to Nigeria/Africa.

### **3.1 Language Endangerment in Northern Nigeria: Worst-Case Scenarios**

Even as it could be said that language endangerment is a common phenomenon in Nigeria, it appears the threat is more in northern Nigeria. Compelling pieces of evidence abound in the extant literature. For instance, in a list of over 150 Nigerian languages in



danger of disappearing compiled by Ugwuoke (1999:15-27), over eighty percent (80%) of the languages are in the north. In another list from the same source, of Nigerian languages spoken by less than 500 people, the north alone has about ninety percent (90%) of the languages with Adamawa, Bauchi, Kaduna, Niger, Plateau and Taraba at the top of the list (c.f. Omachonu 2007, 2009). In yet another list from Centre for Endangered Languages (CEL), of the states in Nigeria losing their languages, Bauchi, Gombe, Plateau, Nasarawa, Kebbi, Niger, Kogi, Sokoto, Kaduna and others states from northern Nigeria were also listed.

Samu (1991) reported that in his preliminary investigation of languages spoken in Bauchi Local Government Area, not even one native speaker of Butanci was found. Similarly, it was reported that Yankam, a small group language in Plateau state had a population of about 7,500 speakers by the 1963 head counts but which has at present lost its linguistic identity to Hausa. As reported by Awal (1984) cited in Kuju (1999) concerning this language; of about 100 supposed native speakers of the language randomly sampled, none below the age of thirty could speak the language.

Michael Brunz, a German linguist as reported in Okwudishu (1997), Kuju (1999) and Omachonu (2007), discovered in one of the languages he investigated in the North Eastern part of Nigeria, precisely Bauchi state, that only two surviving speakers were found. And as reported further, even the two speakers (elderly) spoke different dialects of the language which were hardly mutually intelligible.

My 'hands-on experience' in Nasarawa State (North Central Nigeria) shows that in Wamba LGA of the state, a language such as Nungu is already extinct and the remaining speakers of the language now speak Rindre, a neighbouring language in the same LGA. Similarly, the following languages are spoken in only a village each in Wamba LGA<sup>1</sup>: Raga spoken only in Nakere, Ninzo spoken in Arum- Haji, Arum spoken only in Arum. It is said that every Ninzo speaker understands Arum but Arum speakers do not understand Ninzo. Kantana is spoken in only a few small villages, namely, Kwara and Mama and a few others in Wamba LGA of Nasarawa State. These languages are severely endangered. The case of Nungu reported earlier above is similar to that of Reshe, a Western Kainji language once spoken in Sokoto State (North Western Nigeria) but whose surviving speakers now use only Hausa (see Amfani 2001).

### 3.2 Reasons for Language Endangerment in Nigeria

From personal observations, fieldwork and reading of the extant literature on language endangerment in Nigeria, we could isolate the following as the main causes of language endangerment in Nigeria:

- a. The dominant influence of regional languages, e.g. Hausa as "a big brother" and lingua franca in northern Nigeria, Igbo in the east and Yoruba in the west.
- b. Unhealthy or negative language attitude towards the native languages by the respective speakers as evident in Nigeria.
- c. Slow pace of language study & Development especially among the minor & minority or small group languages.

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<sup>1</sup> Results of Fieldwork with three of my students in Nasarawa State University, Keffi: Sani Shafa'au Abdulmumin, Taritakpa Loveth Johnson, Maryam Ibrahim Dahiru, 28th, March, 2014.

- d. Lack of government involvement in active language planning and development, e.g. absence of a comprehensive and well-articulated language policy in Nigeria.
- e. Ignorance and poverty: this goes in tandem with the assertion that most of the small, weak, and endangered languages are located in hot climate zones and are often spoken by people who are very poor in terms of economic and material resources (Allwood as cited in Emeanajo (2010:9).

#### **4. Reversing the Trend: Practical Approaches to Language Documentation to Minimize the Negative Effects of Endangerment on Nigerian Languages**

Even amidst the strangulating effects of endangerment, Nigerian languages must survive because language is one of the most viable legacies that can help us recover our lost glory and redeem our already battered international image. Besides, now that Nigeria, even Africa at large, is fast losing out to the West politically, economically, socially, culturally and even linguistically, especially as it relates to our dominated linguistic heritage in the global village, should we fold our arms and watch on helplessly as our languages get erased gradually from the linguistic world map? Among other wake-up calls, intensive and extensive development and standardization of the languages through state-of-the-art documentation and description could minimize the effects of endangerment on languages in Nigeria.

##### **4.1 Language Documentation and Description: Some Conceptual Explications**

It may be difficult, if not impossible; to do good description without documentation, and documentation is not complete without description. The overt relationship between language documentation and description notwithstanding, practitioners tend to draw a contrast between the two linguistic practices. For instance, while ‘description *typically involves the production of grammars, dictionaries, and collections of texts. Description provides an understanding of language at a more abstract level, as a system of elements, rules, constructions and so on*’ (Himmelman 1998, 2002:48), ‘language documentation is discourse-centered: its primary goal is the direct representation of a wide range of discourse types’ (Austin 2006, Woodbury 2003). Describing further the concept ‘language documentation’ Gippert, Himmelman & Mosel 2006:v assert that it is concerned with the methods, tools, and the theoretically underpinnings of compiling a representative and lasting multipurpose record of a natural language or one of its varieties. They outline the origin, historical development and features of language documentation, thus:

- a. Synonymous with documentary linguistics, it developed over the last decade largely in response to the urgent need to make an enduring record of endangered languages and to support speakers of the languages in their desire to maintain them (see also Whalen 2003, Austin 2007).
- b. Fueled by developments in ICT and media technologies which make documentation, preservation and dissemination of language data possible in ways which could not previously be envisioned.
- c. Essentially concerned with role of language speakers and their rights and needs.



In addition, Himmelmann (2006:15) and Austin (2007:2) identify the following as the essential features of linguistic documentation:

- a. *Focus on primary data* – language documentation deals with the collection and analysis of an array of primary language data to be made available for a wide range of users;
- b. *Explicit concern for accountability* – access to primary data and representations of it makes evaluation of linguistic analyses possible and expected;
- c. *Concern for long-term storage and preservation of primary data* – language documentation includes a focus on archiving in order to ensure that documentary materials are made available to potential users into the distant future;
- d. *Work in interdisciplinary teams* – documentation requires input and expertise from a range of disciplines and is not restricted to linguistics alone;
- e. *Close cooperation with and direct involvement of the speech community* – language documentation requires active and collaborative work with community members both as producers of language materials and as co-researchers.

In all, having defined and contrasted language documentation with description, the remaining part of this section will concern itself with skills, methods, and tools for practically oriented language documentation which could lead to good description of Nigerian languages and in turn minimize the negative effects of endangerment on the languages. These form the basis of the discussion in 4.2. below.

#### **4.2 Language Documentation: Skills, Methods, and Tools (Equipment)**

Austin (2007:3-4) proposes the following as the skills required for the state-of-the-art language documentation, namely:

- a. *Project conception, design and management* - familiarity with documentation theory, applied ethics, intellectual property rights and socio-cultural issues, stakeholder communication, etc.
- b. *Knowledge of funding outlets /agencies and Grant application* writing
- c. *Media management* – recording techniques, field methods, data transfer, backup, etc.
- d. *Data and metadata management* – data and metadata representation, transcription, linguistic analysis (phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics) and annotation, use of linguistic software tools (Transcriber, praat, Shoebox/Toolbox, ELAN, IMDI, keyboard layout/setting for peculiar symbols), audio/video converters, data integrity and sustainability (See also Bird & Simons 2003), workflow design and management
- e. *Mobilisation* - familiarity with applied linguistics concepts (orthography design, lexicography, curriculum development, policy formation, revitalisation), publication skills, multimedia design and implementation (See also Nathan 2006, Nathan & Casto 2006)
- f. *Team-based research*, skills sharing and transfer, capacity development
- g. *Reporting*, presentation, effective writing and communication skills

In terms of the methods for language documentation, the following stages of language documentation project may be identified (see also Austin (2007:2-3):

- a. Project conceptualisation and design
- b. Establishment of field site, including negotiation of permissions
- c. Funding application
- d. Data collection and processing: systematic multimedia recording, transcription, translation and analysis (glossing, multi-tier annotation, translation, etc.) of the broadest possible variety of spoken (and written) language samples collected within their appropriate social and cultural context (HRELP 2006).
- e. Sub-stages for data collection and analysis
  - (i) *recording* – of media (audio, video, image) and text
  - (ii) *capture* – moving analogue materials to the digital domain (where required)
  - (iii) *analysis* – transcription, translation, annotation, and notation of metadata
  - (iv) *archiving* – creating archival objects, and assigning access and usage rights
  - (v) *mobilization* – publication, and distribution of the materials in various forms
- f. Creation of outputs
- g. Evaluation and reporting

The question may be asked that, after conceptualization, successful funding application, site identification and permission, what specific data would be recorded, how much of it and what appropriate instruments should be used at the stages of data collection and processing? These questions are what we shall attempt to answer while the discussions in this section last.

In terms of what data, and how much of it to record, it has to be multimedia (audio, video, etc.) recording of the primary data (corpus) in the forms of a comprehensive record of the linguistic practices characteristic of a given speech community, namely (see also Himmelmann 1998, Haruna 2014:3):

- a. The observable linguistic behaviour, manifest in everyday interactions btw members of the speech community
- b. The native speakers' metalinguistic knowledge, manifest in their ability to provide interpretations and systematizations for linguistic units and events.
- c. Woodbury (2003): the corpus will ideally be *large*, cover a *diverse* range of genres and contexts, be *expandable*, *opportunistic*, *portable*, *transparent*, *ethical* and *preservable*.

In terms of audio (voice) recording, to be more precise, one would need voice recorders such as compact flash (solid state memory) recorders, Mini-Disc (MD/HiMD), hard disk recorders, USB audio interfaces for e.g. a laptop, analog cassette tape recorders, headphones etc. (see appendix I for samples of audio recorders). In all, it should be noted that what count in audio recording (cf. Trilsbeek 2011) are the right recording circumstances, right microphone type and placement, good quality equipment, and correct settings and level adjustments on recording device.

Since the practice in language documentation is to elicit multimedia recording of corpora which should comprise both audio and video recorded data, one would also need video camcorder with lens hood, UV-filter, lens cap and shoulder, strap, tripod

with correct plate, sufficient SD memory cards (or tapes), rechargeable batteries, manuals (PDF or paper), and so on. In selecting the video camcorder to use, it is advisable to focus on High Definition (HD) video at the cost of uncompressed sound (see Appendix II for sample of video camcorder and See also Trilsbeek 2011 for essential points on good video recording). Besides, audio and video recorders, other tools and equipment for data collection and/or recording include: photo camera, laptop, hard disk, microphone/microphone stand: microphones with different characteristics (see appendix III) and microphone cables with different lengths, power generating devices, power adapters suitable for the country in which the project site is located, equipment manuals, pen/pencils and notebook for field notes (See also Trilsbeek 2011 for essential points on good audio and video recording).

#### 4.2 Computer Software for Data Processing in Language Documentation

As it was observed earlier in (4.1.) above, the sub-discipline documentary linguistics or language documentation was fueled by developments in ICT and media technologies which make documentation, processing, preservation and dissemination of language data possible in ways which could not previously be envisioned. Expectedly, over the years certain, computer softwares have been developed to aid the practice and processes of data collection, processing and analysis in language documentation, and even linguistic description eventually. These include ELAN, TOOLBOX (FLEX, newer version of toolbox), PRAAT among others.

ELAN is a linguistic annotator, (EUDICO Linguistic Annotator) which can be downloaded free from <http://www.lat-mpi.eu/tools/elan>. It is an annotation tool that allows you to create, edit, visualize and search annotations for video and audio data. It was developed at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen, The Netherlands, with the aim to provide a sound technological basis for the annotation and exploitation of multi-media recordings. ELAN is specifically designed for the analysis of language, sign language, and gesture, but it can be used by everybody who works with media corpora, i.e., with video and/or audio data, for purposes of annotation, analysis and documentation. The annotation process involves three major steps:

- a. defining linguistic types and tiers
- b. selecting time intervals
- c. entering annotations

It is to be noted that an annotation is any type of text (e.g. a transcription, a translation, coding, etc.) that you enter on a tier whereas a tier is a set of annotations that share the same characteristics, e.g., one tier containing the orthographic transcription, and another tier containing the free translation. The reader may wish to see the ELAN file of my documentation project 2011-2012 sponsored by Alexander Humboldt Foundation Fellowship (The Georg Forster Research Fellowships), Federal Republic of Germany attached as appendix IV).

**Toolbox** (Shoebox, old name; the newer version, flex= FieldWorks Language Explorer); identified, as follows:

- 
- a. provided by SIL International ([www.sil.org](http://www.sil.org)), written as a DOS program in 1987 by SIL linguist John Wimbish
  - b. Speech Analyzer (acoustic analysis, similar/simpler than PRAAT)
  - c. data management: "a database application that interlinearizes, analyses and stores text and can convert this into an alphabetically ordered dictionary"
  - d. freeware

What it does: the descriptive linguistic tasks of Toolbox include:

- i. phonetic transcription
- ii. phonological analysis
- iii. phonemic transcription
- iv. morphological analysis
- v. syntactic analysis
- vi. building a dictionary
- vii. export of text examples
- viii. publication of dictionary (print)
- ix. multi-media presentation (annotated recordings/videos)

#### **PRAAT: C.f. Will Styler 2012. Using Praat for Linguistic Research**

- ✓ Download the January 2012 version at: <http://savethevowels.org/praat>
- Audio/Video editors, e.g. audio and video converters, (e.g. freemake), adobe premier, AVS video editor, windows live movie editor, etc.

The reader may wish to see some of the document files of my documentation project 2011-2012 sponsored by Alexander Humboldt Foundation Fellowship (The Georg Forster Research Fellowships), Federal Republic of Germany attached as appendices IV, V, and VI below.

#### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

With comprehensive and state-of-the-art documentation, Nigerian languages could be sufficiently equipped to combat the negative effects of endangerment; preserved and empowered to cope with new functions that come with the tide of modernity even in the global village. Against the background of the conclusion drawn above, one would recommend that:

- a. The Linguistic Association of Nigeria (LAN) should endeavour to organise workshops on the various aspects of language documentation project for the training of members on the state-of-the-art documentation in the subsequent LAN conferences.
- b. Departments of Linguistics in Nigerian universities should be encouraged to introduce (practical) Linguistic Field Methods at the undergraduate level for take-off training in language documentation even at that level.
- c. Similarly, Departments of Linguistics in Nigerian universities should be encouraged to introduce academic programmes in Language Documentation at the PGD, Master degree, and PhD levels as one finds, for example, in SOAS (London), University of Uyo (Nigeria), and so on.

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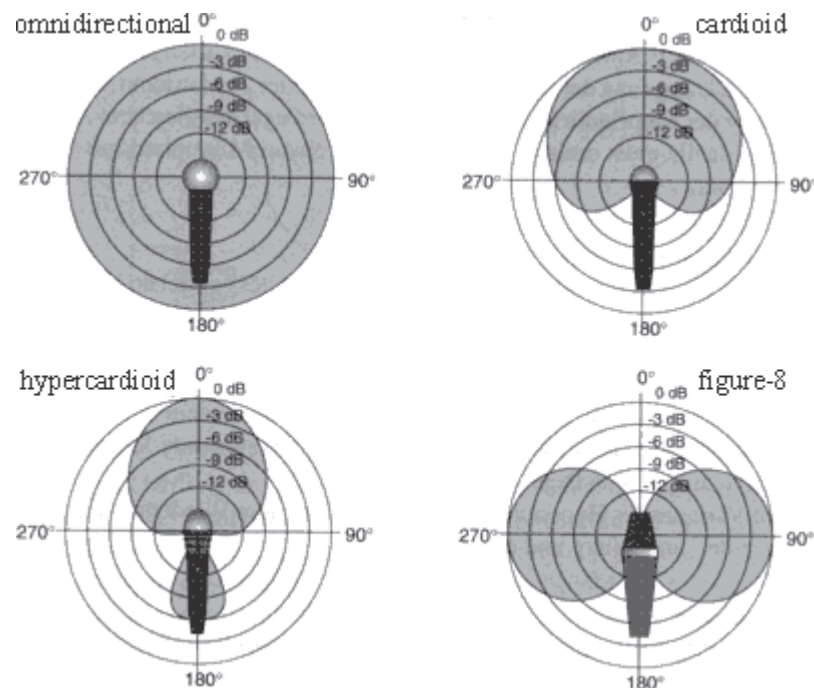
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**Appendix i: Samples of Voice Recorders****Appendix ii: Samples of Video Camcorders**



### Appendix iii: Microphones With Different Characteristics (adapted from Trilsbeek 2011)



### Appendix iv: ELAN File

The screenshot shows the ELAN software interface for the file 'celebrating\_kolanut.eaf'. The interface includes a video window on the left showing a man speaking, and a timeline on the right with various linguistic annotations. The timeline is divided into segments for different linguistic levels, including:

- ref@FE [45]:** Contains the text 'àmatà wa' and 'dma mè kù tò tú ùlè'.
- tx@FE [44]:** Contains the text 'our fathers' and 'your child who trav'.
- ft@FE [44]:** Contains the text 'has returned safely' and 'he has brought thi'.
- nt@FE [44]:** Contains the text 'has returned safely' and 'he has brought thi'.
- ref@GP [19]:** Contains the text 'has returned safely' and 'he has brought thi'.
- tx@GP [19]:** Contains the text 'has returned safely' and 'he has brought thi'.

The timeline also includes a volume control slider (0 to 100) and a rate control slider (0 to 100). The selection mode is set to 'Selection Mode' and 'Loop Mode' is checked.

## Appendix v: MDF (Dictionary) Generated from Toolbox

| \lx Lexeme | \ps Part of spe | \ge Gloss (E) | \de Definition (E)      |
|------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| jómá       | v               | taste         | to taste sth.           |
| jọ         | v               | be[PL]        | to be (children etc.)   |
| jù         | v               | blow          | to blow (wind etc.)     |
| jùjà       | v               | wrestle       | to wrestle              |
| ka         | v               | go.sour       | to go sour (food)       |
| ká         | v               | pluck         | to pluck (a fruit etc.) |
| kà         | v               | say           | to say sth. ; to speak  |
| kàdé       | v               | torch         | torch ; reach           |
| kadufù     | v               | announce      | to announce             |
| kàéle      | <i>interpro</i> | which         | *empty*                 |
| káfù       | v               | distract      | to distract             |
| kàjọ       | v               | judge         | to judge so.            |

## Appendix vi: Toolbox File

| marriage_in_igala.tbtt             |                                   |    |                           |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----|---------------------------|
| ref                                | marriage_in_igala 161             |    |                           |
| ELAN                               | 1024.740                          |    |                           |
| ELAN                               | 1026.340                          |    |                           |
| ELAN                               | SA                                |    |                           |
| x                                  | álu kù                            | ma | á no áwà dō álu íàlā dā   |
| nb                                 | álu kù                            |    |                           |
| ge                                 | way RE                            |    |                           |
| os                                 | n relp                            |    |                           |
|                                    | this is hov                       |    |                           |
| Backup of celebrating_kolanut.tbtt |                                   |    |                           |
| \ref                               | \lx                               |    | \rt                       |
| celebrating_kola                   | àmatá wa                          |    | our fathers               |
| celebrating_kola                   | ọma mẹ kì ló tú ùlẹ               |    | your child who travel     |
| celebrating_kola                   | òun dójì wá kpàì ọláfà yí         |    | has returned safely       |
| celebrating_kola                   | òun du óbì kì dẹ i wá yí          |    | he has brought this k     |
| celebrating_kola                   | ólí kì jọ éfòko kì ọjọ nyí mà che |    | trees in the forest cri   |
| celebrating_kola                   | àbee kì a gbẹ jọ únyí mà          |    | those planted at hom      |
| celebrating_kola                   | óbì che ókà éfù àmólí yí òun      |    | kolanut is one of thes    |
| celebrating_kola                   | ónà kì ọjọ múdà du ọlafẹ nwú      |    | but the way God has       |
| celebrating_kola                   | í che óbì òun yóyó tú             |    | it is not kolanut that is |
| celebrating_kola                   | í che òun yóyó tú àbee            |    | it is not fatter than the |
| celebrating_kola                   | í che óbì á rínýò tú àmẹrólí      |    | it is not kolanut that is |
| celebrating_kola                   | í à che òun á lùkókó tú           |    | it is not bitter than oth |
| celebrating_kola                   | àmáa ọlafẹ kì ọjọ múdà du nwú     |    | but the way God has n     |
| celebrating_kola                   | ọjọ kì jẹ kì ọma kì dẹ kì dójì    |    | may this child who has    |
| celebrating_kola                   | àché                              |    | amen                      |
| celebrating_kola                   | àwa kà jọ únyí kì là wá á bá      |    | may those of us he has    |
| celebrating_kola                   | àché                              |    | amen                      |



## **2. Language Endangerment: Globalisation and the Fate of Minority Languages in Nigeria**

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It is now a fact that a great many minority languages in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world are endangered and may likely face extinction in the near future, because of constant changes and or increase in socio-economic and political developments that failed to provide a level playing ground for minority languages to compete favourably with other languages. There is a drastic reduction in the number of speakers of most minority languages as well as a reduction in the functions such languages originally performed. It is therefore, against this background that this paper seeks to give elaborate explanation of language endangerment, paying particular attention to globalisation as one of the causes of language endangerment with the view to examining the fate of minority languages in Nigeria in this era of globalisation. After critically examining the situation of minority languages in Nigeria, the paper concludes that minor languages, especially those in Nigeria may continue to be endangered as globalisation becomes more and more sophisticated. It is therefore wise to encourage the use of minority languages in Nigeria in all endeavours such that the cultural heritage of the indigenous people will be maintained.

### **Introduction**

All languages of the world perform a communicative role, but because of certain changes and activities, some languages are classified as endangered languages, major languages, minor languages, etc. Language endangerment is a term that worries not only the linguists, but also everyone that is language-conscious. Every group aspires to promote its language no matter how small or big such a group is. However, this present world is being targeted at integrating all the resources of the world into a manageable unit. It is in line with this that Ashafa (2008:27) states that “in the contemporary world, globalisation has undoubtedly come to assume one of the most popular issues fundamental to man in his relationship and in his production relations”. This statement explains the extent to which globalisation has find its place in the life of man, integrating all man’s efforts on earth. And language is a veritable tool for globalisation hence globalisation is a system that has a strong desire to use a common language (English) in it processes as such a particular language is being called a language of globalisation. This brings about the death of many minor languages. It is not new saying that change is constant and as such, globalisation always poses some forms of changes that directed man towards unconscious efforts to cope with the challenges of the dynamic workings of the world. However, all these activities are targeted at integrating social, economic, cultural and political life of the world into a whole using a common language. Although, globalisation has been a tool that everybody seeks in this present world, it is also one of the factors that has eaten deep into the fabrics of the

world languages particularly the minor languages. Ashafa (2008:27) quoting Barnevik 1996 notes that:

As we approach the new country, globalisation is both a great business management challenge and an opportunity to spread prosperity around the world. To be successful, companies will have to be able to change as rapidly as their customers and the world economy. That means having a real presence in every part of the world, focusing on flexibility, tapping the strength of cultural diversity, rewarding cross-borders collaboration and accepting change as a way of life.

Looking at the work of globalisation as noted by Barnevik above, it is clear to understand that it is only language that will be used to achieve the goals of globalisation. By so doing, many languages are endangered especially the so called minor languages hence they are not promoted in any way. It is in this wise that Hutchison (2001:1) states that “in an environment where African languages are marginalized and even threatened with extinction because of such factors as globalisation and neocolonialist suppression, there is a great opportunities for foreign scholars to collaborate with African counterparts in enhancing African language status”. This paper examines language endangerment as one of the challenges caused by globalisation and seeks to address the fate of minority languages in this era of rapid developments in social, economic, cultural and political integration.

### **Language Endangerment**

It is earlier noted that language endangerment is a problem that worries not only the linguist but to those who are language conscious. According to Wikipedia, “... the accelerated pace of language endangerment is considered to be a problem by linguists and by the speakers”. In the recent times, linguists have given much interest to language endangerment as varieties of definitions have been offered to the term. According to the Free Encyclopedia, “An endangered language is a language that is at risk of falling out of use as its speakers die out or shift to speaking another language. In a similar way, UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages notes that “a language is endangered when it is on a path toward extinction. Without adequate documentation... when its speakers cease to use it, use it in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains, and cease to pass it on from one generation to the next”. Anthony Woodbury is also of the view that “an endangered language is one that is likely to become extinct in the near future. He explains further that many languages are falling out of use and are being replaced by the popular languages in the regions because these languages are no longer learned by the younger generation or even adult speakers. Elugbe & Udoh (2006:19) are of the view that “endangered languages are languages that are threatened by extinction because they are not passed onto a younger generation”. Fakuade (1999:58) maintains that the most obvious definition of language Endangerment is by the number of speakers. He argues that “a language with fewer speakers is most likely to be endangered in comparison with a language with a larger population of speakers”. This then brings about the cut-off mark for



the number of speakers of endangered languages. Brezinger, (1991:25) state that: five hundred speakers qualify as cut-off mark for endangerment. However, UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered languages is of the opinion that “Even languages with many thousands of speakers are no longer being acquired by children...” Agreeing with UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages Bamgbose (1993:19) quotes Fakuade thus: “there are languages spoken by thousands of speakers which are nevertheless endangered while some languages with fewer speakers manage to resist the threat of endangerment because of strong language loyalty”. It is view of the above that Bamgbose adds language loyalty as a criterion for defining language endangerment. He argues that “where loyalty is not strong, it is a short step to language shift and eventual language death”. Hale (1992:23) is of the view that language endangerment is an “incidence of domination by a more powerful language”.

Some languages spoken worldwide are at the brink or shrinking level. According to Kuju (1999:38) “a report published by Time Magazine revealed that there is hard evidence that the number of languages in the world are shrinking; of the roughly 6,500 languages now spoken, up to half are already endangered or on the brink of extinction”. Wikipedia also states that “the general consensus is that there are between 6000 and 7000 languages currently spoken, and that between 50-90% those will have become extinct by the year 2100”. Similarly, Charles (2006:2) cited in Agbede (2007:71) notes that “it is being estimated that globally, some 4,000 languages have already been lost, with some 6,000 remaining, but with the majority facing one level of risk or the other”. Supporting the above view, Agbede notes that “The threat of extinction tugging on the faces of the so-called endangered languages is so real that linguists are frightened to the point of suggesting that languages death occurs somewhere in the world every two weeks. Also, a document submitted to the International Expert Meeting on UNESCO Programme Safeguarding of Endangered Languages titled “language vitality and endangerment” notes that: “Even languages with many thousands of speakers are no longer being acquired by children; at least 50% of the world’s more than six thousand languages are losing speakers. We estimate that, in most world regions, about 90% of the languages may be replaced by dominant languages by the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century”. According to Lehmann (1999:4),

The number of languages in the word probably reached its climax in the fifteenth century AD, i.e. before European colonization of Africa, America and Australia set in. Since then, the forces that extinguish languages have carried the day. Hundreds of languages have died out, and the process has been accelerating dramatically in the second half of our century, i.e. essentially during our life time. At present, there are over 6,000 languages still spoken in the world. It has been estimated in Hale et al. (1992) that only 10% of them will survive the next century. Currently, an estimated dozen dies out every year.

The above shows that many languages of the world are being restricted from performing certain functions. It is in this vein that Suzanne posits that:



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Fewer than 4 percent of the world's languages have any of official status in the countries where they are spoken. The fact that most languages are unwritten, not recognized officially, restricted to local community and home functions, and spoken by very small groups of people reflects the balance of power in the global linguistic market place.

Having looked at the rate at which languages of the world are being endangered, the question now is: Whose languages are endangered? In a bid to answer the above question, Anthony Woodbury asserts that "... the endangered languages are spoken by minority communities, these communities account for most of the world's languages". This shows that language endangerment is a linguistic phenomenon that affects mostly the languages of the minor communities of the world. In Nigeria, language endangerment has long been encroached into the linguistic landscape since the era of colonialism. Huruna (2005), cited in Agbede (2007:72), declares that "over half of the languages of the northern region are moribund, that is not effectively being passed onto the next generation".

Various classifications have been given to language endangerment to enhance its study and analysis; as such UNESCO operates on five levels of language endangerment: "Safe", "vulnerable" (not spoken by children outside the home), "definitely endangered" (children not speaking), "severely endangered" (only spoken by the oldest generations), "critically endangered" (spoken by few members of the oldest generation, often semi speakers". Another alternative scheme of classification has been offered by Krauss (2007:21) as he defines languages as "safe" if it is considered that children will probably be speaking them in 100 years (approximately 60-80% of languages fall into this category); and "Moribund" if children are not speaking them now".

Many reasons have been advanced for language endangerment. According to UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered languages (2003:15) "... community members abandon their language because they believe they have no alternative, or because they do not have enough knowledge about the long-term consequences of the "choices" they make." Lehmann (1999:5) is of the view that the situation of the language in a social community is a cause of language endangerment. He argues that "if the language competes with another one which ousts it from public usage and pushes it into the corner of intimacy, so that its range of use gets restricted, this is a first signal of alarm". Mufwene (2001:3) argues that linguists have seldom interpreted the process of language attrition and death first as the results of adaptive responses of speakers to changing political and socio-economic conditions around them". However, according to the Cambridge Handbook of Endangered Languages, "there are four main types of causes of language endangerment. There are causes that put the population that speak the languages in physical danger such as:

1. Natural disasters, famine, diseases. An example of this is the languages spoken by the people of the Andaman Islands, who were seriously affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami.

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2. War and genocide, examples of this are the language(s) of the indigenous population of Tasmania who were wiped out by colonists, and many extinct and endangered languages of the Americas where indigenous peoples have been subjected to genocidal violence, or in the cases of the Miskito language in Nicaragua and the Mayan languages of Guatemala have been affected by civil war. And there are those causes which prevent or discourage speakers from using a language, such as:
    - a. Political repression: This has frequently happened when nations-states working to promote a single national culture limit the opportunities for using minority languages in the public sphere, schools, the media, and elsewhere, sometimes even prohibiting them altogether. Sometimes ethnic groups are forcibly resettled, or children may be removed to be schooled away from home, or otherwise have their chances of cultural and linguistic continuity disrupted. This has happened in the case of many Native American and Australian Languages, as well as European and Asian Minority languages such as Breton or Alsatian in France and Kurdish in Turkey.
    - b. Cultural/political/economic marginalization/hegemony. This happens when political and economic power is closely tied to a particular language and culture so that there is a strong incentive for individuals to abandon their language (on behalf of themselves and their children) in favour of another more prestigious one. This frequently happens when indigenous populations, in order to achieve a higher social status, adopt the cultural and linguistic traits of a people who have come to dominate them through colonization, conquest, or invasion. Examples of this kind of endangerment are the Welsh Language in Great Britain, and Ainu in Japan. This is the most common cause of language endangerment. Sometimes more than one of these causes act at the same time, as poverty, disease and disasters often affect minority groups disproportionately, for example causing the dispersal of speaker populations and decreased survival rates for those who stay behind. In addition, cultural hegemony may often arise not from domination or conquest but simply from increasing contact with a larger and more influential language community through better communications compared with the relative isolation of past centuries.

The above discussion centres on the adaptive response of speakers of the minor languages to the changing political and socio-economic conditions around them as it has been rightly observed by Mufwene (2001:3). In this modern world, all these conditions that Mufwene has stated are termed globalisation. According to wikipedia, “globalisation and other factors speed language loss. Globalisation is endangering languages, as people prefer to conduct business and communicate in widely used tongues like English, Chinese and Hindi. Public education, the internet and print and television media also speed the rate of language loss”. He further stresses that as “globalisation” increases, so does the loss of human languages. People find it easier to conduct business and communicate with those

outside their own culture if they speak more widely used languages like Chinese, Hindi, English, Spanish or Russian. Children are not being educated in languages spoken by a limited number of people. As fewer people use local languages, they gradually die out”.

### **Globalisation and the Fate of Minority Languages in Nigeria**

Globalisation is a term that is in virtually all spheres of human endeavours in this present world. Scholars have shown greater interest in studying the phenomenon, giving way to many views on the concept. According to wikipedia, “globalisation is the process of international integration arising from the interchange of world views, products, ideas and other aspects of culture”. Radhakrishnan (2004) in Adedimeji (2009:2) maintains that “the increasing empowerment of Western cultural values, including language, philosophy and worldview and the predominance of escalation in the mobility of labor, information and services have brought about the true worldwide revolution called globalisation. Globalisation has therefore, been defined variously by scholars depending on the nature of influence they receive from the phenomenon.

The impact of globalisation in Nigeria cannot be over emphasized. According to Adamu (2003:21), the reality of

Globalisation is like a wild fire, it has started, it is uncontrollable and nobody knows where it is taking us. What is evident is that no person, family, religion and society is immune to it. It is therefore, shaping our society’s labour market and its pattern of inequality, its consumption, its health, its political stability and legitimacy, values and member’s life style. We as humanity, are shaping and affecting globalisation and globalisation is shaping and affecting us.

Adedimeji (2009:2), argues that “like all revolutions, globalisation appears to threaten the economic, socio-cultural, linguistic, educational and political independence of all people in the world such that the question that befuddles every nation is that which confronted James Scott who was lost in the *Himalayas*, a book he wrote; How can I survive? This question of survival in the global world is central to developing nations among which Nigeria ranks high”. Kubota (2001:1) posits that “the tremendous impact of globalisation on the world has thus engendered the entrenchment of the Anglo-American culture with the English language emerging as “a global language” spoken by more than two billion people of the world today”. Similarly, a document powered by the Universal Post Manager maintains that languages are the essential medium in which the ability to communicate across culture develops. Knowledge of one or several languages enables us to perceive new horizons to think globally, and to increase our understanding of ourselves and our neighbours. Languages are then the very life line of globalisation. Without globalisation, there would be no world languages. Arguing the point further, the document states clearly the effect of global languages on the minority languages “the undesirable culture change and language shift within the context of global interconnectedness, threatens in no small measure the survival of minority languages.” The Nigerian linguistic space is not an exception to this emerging reality.” Awonusi (2006:53-69) notes that “one of the

fundamental ways through which globalisation affects us today is at the level of cultural and linguistic identity.” It is in view of the above that Adedimeji, (2009:6) observes that “the peculiar Nigerian cultural values, like languages, are being eroded by the pop culture brought by globalisation. He argues further that the monolingual attitude adopted by Nigerian middle class which imposes the use of English alone on their families is a tragic situation ensnaring the youths of today and fast resulting to zero language scenario. According to Ogunjimi and Na’Allah (2005:35-36) “... the hip-hop generation in the New World, and even those forming in Africa, are fast adopting a bastardization of urbanity enhanced by electronic gadget to represent a new cultural identity.”

According to wikipedia, “there is a general consensus that the loss of languages harms the cultural diversity of the world. Many projects are under way aimed at preventing or slowing this loss by revitalizing endangered languages and promoting education and literacy in minority languages.” It is in response to the above that Adedimeji (2009:9) while discussing the roles of culture in development in Globalisation and the survival of the Nigerian cultural and linguistic heritage: The American paradigm holds that “culture produces language and it is advanced by it. The engine room of development is culture, with all its linguistic and non-linguistic variables. Communication is all what makes the world network, interact and advance.” He also advances the relevant questions posed by experts as follows: “can any country approximate first rank economic development if it relies overwhelmingly on foreign languages for its discourse on development and transformation and in education? Will Africa ever effectively take off when it is held hostage so tightly to the languages of its former imperial powers?”

The above questions have been answered by Bernard (1992:76) when he says “the extinction of each language results in the irrecoverable loss of unique cultural, historical, and ecological knowledge. Each language is unique expression of the human experience of the world. Thus, the knowledge of any single language may be the key to answering fundamental questions of the future. Every time a language dies, we have less evidence for understanding patterns in the structure and function of human language, human prehistory, and the maintenance of the world’s diverse ecosystem. Above all, speakers of these languages may experience the loss of their language as a loss of their original ethnic and cultural identity.”

In Nigeria, the linguistic situation is that of dominant and dominated languages of different degrees of domination. English has occupied a hegemonic status. It dominates the three major languages which in turn dominate the layers of the vast minority languages in the country through its official, instrumental and integrative functions. Nigeria has an estimated population of 160 million with over 500 languages (Bamgbose 1993:15). Although Nigeria is one of the countries with the highest linguistic diversity, it is not only the most populous country in Africa; it is largely a multilingual country with languages of unequal social, official and educational status. The linguistic hierarchy presents a harsh reality in the Nigerian linguistic situation. Within this context, minority languages in Nigeria like Etilo, Igede, Bura, Angash, Annang, etc., are invariably being endangered by the dominant Nigerian languages. This gap is widened by the emergent cultural uniformity or globalized economics and media. The numbers of languages humans speak in Nigeria

are reduced. As the world economy becomes more integrated, a common tongue has become important than ever to promote commerce and that puts speakers of regional dialects and minority languages in Nigeria at a disadvantage. Telecommunication has also pressured languages in Nigeria to become more standardized, further endangering local variations of languages. The absence of standardization or mainstreaming the fate of minority languages seems of a conjecture. The pigdnised form of English is used in most homes today and it is the predominant means of communication. The minority languages suffer as a result hence there is lack of orthography in most minority languages in Nigeria making standardization almost impossible to achieve. Culturally, specific information about minority languages may disappear along with a world language in the whirlpool of globalisation. For instance, knowledge about unique medicines and treatment used by minority language groups could be lost forever if the language used to transmit that information is banned by a global culture.

Looking at the Nigerian linguistic situation above, there is need to promote the minority languages in Nigeria. According to Adedimeji (2009:17), “the Sole Privilege being accorded English, which is spoken by less than 30 percent of Nigerians... in all spheres of national life at the expense of the indigenous languages cannot guarantee Nigeria sustainable development and as such, Nigeria languages should be promoted as a matter of urgency. He adds that the vast benefits of promoting indigenous languages are too fundamental to be compromised.” Lehmann (1999:8) also posits that “the beginning of this decade has seen a sudden rise in awareness in the linguistic community of the endangerment of languages and the necessity to do something about it.” He notes further that “the problem was on the agenda of the 1992 International Congress of Linguists. UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered languages argues that “Raising awareness about language loss and language diversity will only be successful when meaningful contemporary roles for minority languages can be established, for the requirements of modern life within the community as well as in national and international contexts. The document includes the use of these languages in everyday life, commerce, education, writing, the arts, and or the media as meaningful contemporary roles and maintains that economic and political support by both local communities and national governments are needed to establish such roles. Similarly, the document (2003:3) notes the red book of languages in danger of disappearing as one of the UNESCO’s programmes for safe guiding endangered languages. It states that “the purpose of that project was to:

1. To systematically gather information on endangered languages including their status and the degree of urgency for undertaking research.
2. To strengthen research and the collection of materials relating to endangered languages for which little or no such activities have been undertaken to date and belong to a specific category such as language isolates, languages of special interest for typological and historical-comparative linguistics, and are in imminent danger of extinction.
3. To undertake activities aiming to establish a world-wide project committee and a network of regional centres as focal points for large areas on the basis of extinction contacts.



4. To encourage publication of materials and the results of studies on endangered languages.

A discussion on the topic “supporting endangered languages” by the UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group reveals that “other speakers of endangered languages, however, attempt to directly counter these threats to their language, and commit themselves to language stabilization and revitalization activities these communities may established environments such as daycare, centres, schools, or at least classes in which their languages are exclusively spoken. The discussion maintains further that “if communities ask for support to reinforce their threatened languages, language specialists should make their skills available to and work with these ethnolinguistic minorities by actively participating in documentation, educational programme”. It is in view of the above that UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered languages (2003:5) has mentioned five areas for sustaining endangered languages as:

- (i) basic linguistic and pedagogical training,
- (ii) sustainable development in literary and local documentation skills.
- (iii) supporting and developing national language policy,
- (iv) supporting and developing educational, and
- (v) improving living conditions and respect for human rights of speakers communities.

Adedimeji (12) observes that the linguistic situation needs strategic planning. “The strategic planning requires a commitment towards preserving the Nigerian languages through the appropriate investment in the sector of culture. This includes but is not limited to the language use of cultural centers in rural and urban areas. Other strategies of preserving Nigerian cultural and linguistic values are highlighted by Adedimeji, thus:

- (a) encouraging the teaching and learning of Nigerian languages and motivating the learners,
- (b) sponsoring the publication of literature and materials on Nigerian languages and taking up the responsibility of distributing such works,
- (c) supporting cultural and linguistic associations or groups that promote Nigerian heritage, and
- (d) Compelling broadcasting in Nigerian languages at the national level.

It is therefore wise to note that the current era of globalisation appear on the surface to be antithetical to the survival of indigenous languages but it behooves every linguistic nationality to preserve its culture-linguistics heritage so as not to lose its past and present and by extension, its future. Adedimeji (2009:14) argues that “globalisation is not about encroaching other peoples’ culture but a dynamic system through which the local occurrences in places generate response in other places. Bamgbose (1993:29) is of the view that “when all is said and done, the fate of the endangered languages may well lie in the

hands of the owners of the language themselves and in their will to make it survive.” Similarly, Williams (1993:87) cited in Agbedo (2007:75) maintains that “only the owners” who alone have the emotional commitment to develop their language.” Moreso, Emananjo (1990:82) adds that “... the fate of endangered language may well lie in the hands of owners of the language themselves and in their will to make it.

### **Conclusion**

The ravaging impact of globalisation on the minority languages in Nigeria is accelerating speedily and the minority languages in Nigeria are continuously endangered. All the speakers of minority languages in Nigeria aspire to speak global language (English). Adedimeji (2009:6) as earlier noted observes that “the peculiar cultural values, like languages, are being eroded by the pop culture brought by globalisation.” It is therefore; wise to promote the use of minority languages in all spheres of life. Minority languages should be the focal point of policy makers in Nigeria, and the languages should center primarily in education and other spheres like the media, home, market, etc. This can help in sustaining the vast number of endangered languages in Nigeria. By so doing, the cultural heritage of the endangered languages in Nigeria will be maintained as Adedimeji (2009:19) submits that “the essence of globalisation in our own case should not lie in submerging the Nigerian languages and cultures.”

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### **3. Threats to Mother Tongues in Nigeria: Strategies for Revitalisation**

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Over the years, there has been a growing decline in the use of the mother tongue among Nigerian children. The home which is supposed to be a fertile ground for the growth of the mother tongue is increasingly becoming unsupportive in this regard. The effect is that Nigerian mother tongues, in their large numbers, face the unsavory threats of endangerment and eventual extinction, if no urgent steps are taken to revitalise them. The objective of this study is to critically analyse the prevalent incidences of this problem and to proffer workable suggestions on how to salvage the situation. The paper therefore offers pragmatic suggestions to enhance Africa's development, to foster the use of Nigerian mother tongues, and to revitalise indigenous Nigerian languages and cultures in order to avert the extinction, if not downright death, of the languages.

#### **Introduction**

The strategic role and power of language in the history of mankind has long been recognised and emphasised by historians, scientists and linguists alike. According to Rodney (2009), man emerged from the Stone Age where he was a gatherer of foods and a hewer of woods and progressed through epochs of civilisations as a result of interactions within and between classes. These interactions, no doubt, were facilitated with the aid of language since no meaningful mobilization and class struggle without effective communication would have been possible. The means of communication identified with humans is language. Man is said to be an animal, but a social and speaking animal. Swande and Ishima (2012:3) attest to this fact when they opine that "it is indeed the ability of man to speak that distinguishes him from other animals." This assertion further echoes the long held position of Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2007:3) that "the possession of language, perhaps, more than any other attribute, distinguishes humans from other animals." The power of language over time therefore is not in doubt. The instrument of language helped man to separate himself from other animals, devise means to enhance his environment, build mansions, articulate moral values, hunt down other animals and yet tame other animals as well as to record his successes over time. The scientist, Isaac Newton (1642--1727), attests to this fact when he asserts that if he could see above others, it was because he stood on the shoulders of giants. This, in essence, means that he was able to read (using the medium of language) the achievements of earlier scientists before him and benefited from their efforts. This would also mean that his own breakthrough would not have been possible if language was not available to record earlier efforts made by his predecessors.

Linguists such as Obor (in press), Stavenhagen (1990) and Hornsby (2014) have also lent their voices to the fact of the ability of language as an effective tool for the facilitation of transformation as well as its role as an instrument for domination. This being



the case, it is not surprising therefore that after Language has helped man to separate himself from other animals, devise means to enhance his environment and elevate his social and moral values, languages are now in battles with each other for identity, superiority and dominance. This development has resulted in the variegated classifications of languages by linguists such as Stephen Warm (1978), Bindoff (1950) in Agocha et al. (2014) as “big and small languages” or “world languages, powerful languages, major and minor languages as well as endangered and extinct languages.”

While it is conceded that languages on their own do not engage in any physical conflicts, users of languages who know the power inherent in languages do. They manipulate them to achieve the objective of linguistic hegemony over others thereby pushing developing languages into perpetual dependence on the more developed one(s) or into extinction. The state of affairs in Africa and particularly in Nigeria is that of linguistic colonialism and imperialism which the ultimate destination is slavery and eventual extinction except steps are taken to reverse the trend.

### **The State of Indigenous Languages in Nigeria**

Recent survey harvested from the internet indicates that more than 50% of the world's languages are located in just eight countries: India, Brazil, Mexico, Australia, Indonesia, Nigeria, Papua New-Guinea and Cameroun (<http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wik/E>). In sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria, incidentally, is one of the most linguistically and culturally diverse countries. Rough estimates put the number of different languages in Nigeria at between 250 to 400 (Jowitt, 1999).

That some languages are dying or disappearing in their numbers is no myth at all. According to an online source quoted by Obor (in press), statistics show that of about 6000 languages currently being spoken worldwide, only about half of the number may survive the next one century. As at May, 2004, research results released by Ethnologue on the internet showed that 417 languages were either extinct or on the verge of extinction! These languages are being spoken by as few as between 1 and 3000 persons. More worrisome is the stark revelation that of the 417 endangered/ extinct languages in the world, 37 are in Africa and Nigeria's share is 14, viz.:

- Bassakontagors, Mariga L.G.A. of Niger State with 10 speakers.
- Bete in Takum L.G.A. of Taraba State where Jukun language is said to be more and more dominant
- Fali, of Baissa in southern Taraba State.
- Holima in Adamawa State with 4 speakers only - Fulfulde is taking over
- Kiong, in Odukpani and Akankpa L.G.A. of Cross Rivers State where Efik predominates
- Lerre in Toro L.G.A. of Bauchi State
- Lufu in Takum L.G.A of Taraba State - Jukum dominates
- Njerep in Takum L.G.A. of Taraba State

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- Putal in Damboa L.G.A. of Borno State. Here, in spite of the large population of Pusai people, the language is dying out in favour of the Kanuri language
  - Shau in Toro L.G.A. of Bauchi State
  - Sheni in Saminaka L.G. A. of Kaduna State.
  - Ziriya in Toro L.G.A. of Bauchi State
- Source: Omahi-Obor (in press: 38-39)

The scenario above is the end result of a chain of events whose details have become hazy with time. However, the important lesson derivable from the development is that it is a call for humanity to take a firm action with a purpose in mind to effect radical change.

Language and culture constitute a chain that sustains human existence in a harmonious whole. Language is the transmitter of culture. Culture is the root of human existence. According to Obor (in press), when a language dies, it is not the language that actually becomes extinct. It is the speakers of the language who, in such a circumstance, become without root and subject to the whims and caprices of the environment. The product of such an environment is dangerous to the society- unappreciative of others and causes frictions in attempts to adjust to a number conflicting alternatives all offering themselves to fill the vacuum. At the end of the transition, a hybrid is produced. Ordinarily, people have assumed that hybrids are better than the originals, but this human hybrid has defied the run of the mill conclusion.

### **Analysis**

With a bias in applied linguistics, this researcher did a pilot survey amongst parents in Benue State with the view to find out the kind of language parents speak with their wards at home--is it, for instance, English language as L1 or parents' language as L1? The interactions cut across social-economic backgrounds of parents, i.e., from the illiterate to the semi-literate ones and the highly educated class. Observation shows that more and more parents now find it more fashionable to interact with their children in English language instead of their parents' languages. What is responsible for this ugly development?

Among the illiterate and the semi-literate class, the assumption is that when children are made to speak only English language at home (which often turns out as pidgin or broken English at the best), it will make it possible for such children to easily grasp the 'class room English' and thereby learn other school subjects better. They also see it as an attempt to bridge the gap between them and the people of the higher social-economic background. This in turn suggests that, parents from the highly educated class see the speaking of English language to their children as a status symbol. Yet, some other individuals within this group who do not see it as a status symbol claim that they find it more convenient to use English with their children since by the nature of their jobs they are bound to communicate (spoken and written form) to virtually everybody and almost all of the time using English language (hence a carry-over effect of some sort).

None of these arguments is wrong; they are all correct. What is however wrong and incorrect is the assumption that it is only when their parents' languages are neglected that

they can better achieve these objectives. This is not only wrong but misleading. The assumption that it is only when other animals (or other languages) die that the lion (the English language) can eat does not hold water in this context. There are proven evidences to the contrary which makes this argument to be inconsistent with the truth. There are a number of distinguished Nigerians who have made the whole of Africa and Nigeria in particular proud with titanic projections of their intellectual supremacy. Profs. Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Gabriel Oyibo et al. make up this list. These men and their counterparts have demonstrated to the whole world how children given birth and brought up by African parents with sound knowledge of their mother-tongue can combine it with western education using the English language in erudition. For instance, Prof. Wole Soyinka was the first African to win a Nobel Prize in literature (he writes mostly in English). Prof. Achebe's works have been translated into more than fifty other languages of the world (he writes chiefly in English). And Prof. Gabriel Oyibo developed a mathematical formula that brought a revolution into the field of natural sciences. Investigations further reveal that each of these men:

- i had a proper parental upbringing
- ii was brought up by people who do not speak English language as L1 to children
- iii could speak their mother-tongues fluently.

Where then lays the erroneous assumption that it is only when children are denied their legitimate right to the knowledge of their mother-tongues that better learning can take place? In contrast to this erroneous assumption, researches and scholars like Odey have continued to insist that "In fact, if a child is not fluent in his/her language, his/her performance in school will likely to be impaired" (Odey, 2014:33).

As stated earlier, many a people have voiced their concerns over the issue of more and more children becoming unable to speak their mother-tongues in Nigeria. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of September 2011, a Radio Nigeria Net-work Programme anchored by one Yahaya Umar hosted the Director of Centre for Black and African languages in which a lot of issues bordering on mother-tongues and education in general were discussed. Caller after caller (including Mr. Dahiru-Kaduna, Mr. Dunyi-Kaduna, Mr. Andrew Ajayi and many more) called in to express their displeasure on the same vexed issue of the inability of young children to speak their native languages. All these discussions go further to underscore, first and foremost, the existence of the problem and secondly the urgent need for decisive and concrete action to be taken in order to reverse this ugly trend. This is the subject matter of this paper because it is the opinion of the writer that if nothing decisive and concrete is done to salvage the native languages, the whole of over two hundred and fifty (250) Nigerian languages will go into complete extinction by the year 2100!

### **The Way Forward**

Reversing this trend requires a holistic approach. Everybody and everything that constitutes the environment in which our children live and interact must be involved. This

includes: the family, the governments, public and philanthropist organizations and the educational institutions. Each of these units has a role to play.

### *The Family*

It is said that the family unit consists of the father, the mother and the children. Relatives of both the father and the mother are however part and parcels of the family unit in Africa. When we talk about ‘mother-tongue’, we are in real fact talking about the language(s) of both the father and that of the mother, whether the unit is *mono-linguistic* (one language spoken by both parents) or *bi-linguistic* i.e. relating to inter-linguistic marriage where more than one language may be involved.

The family unit is the number one determining factor. It is the family that decides which language they will speak to their children at home. The language of the home is the first language that the child comes in contact with and acquires as L1. It is therefore what the father and mother do with respect to the language of the home that the relatives will emulate. And even where relatives choose to deviate, the parents are in the best position to tell what they want. It is therefore very important for parents to realize that if by tomorrow no one speaks the language they learnt from their own parents, it is because they themselves failed to transfer the knowledge of this language to their children. Holding this fact to be true, one can safely suggest that parents must be held responsible *if the mother-tongue dies*.

Let me make it a little clearer. We, the people of Nigeria can speak, for instance, Iggede, Hausa, Tiv, Yoruba, Efik, Igbo, Berom, etc. languages today because:

- i our parents learnt those languages from their own parents
- ii our parents in turn made efforts to transfer what they learnt to us (their off-springs)

*My Question:* What efforts are you making that your children will learn the language of your father from you?

No matter the family set up, there is a formula that works when parents are willing to apply them:

|     |   |    |
|-----|---|----|
| PL  | → | HL |
| LE  | → | SI |
| ENG | → | SL |

### *This Means*

- i Parents’ Language → Home Language (spoken to children)
- ii Language of the Environment → (Learnt through) Social interaction
- iii English Language → Learnt in Schools.

*NB:* Because of the unique position English language occupies in Nigeria, being the official language as well as the language of instructions in schools, parents and others should make it a rule to promptly correct children’s errors wherever and whenever they are committed, including in the home. In correcting children’s errors at home and ‘helping’

them to do their home works, however, one could code-mix English (ENG.) with parents' language (PL) to place importance on both languages. I have experimented this with my daughter (Oludu Ode) using Igede language and I discovered that it works. See the prototype of the approach bellow:

|           |                     |                                                     |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Daddy:    | <i>ya nyi</i> 'A'   | (say 'A')                                           |
| Daughter: | 'A'                 | (daughter echoes 'A')                               |
| Daddy:    | <i>ya nyi</i> 'B'   | (say 'B')                                           |
| Daughter: | 'B'                 | (daughter echoes 'B')                               |
| Daddy:    | <i>ya nyi</i> 'C'   | (say C)                                             |
| Daughter: | 'C'                 | (daughter echoes 'C')                               |
| Daddy:    | <i>ole ti riye?</i> | (daddy pointing at 'A' and asking : what is this ?) |
| Daughter: | <i>ole ri</i> 'A'   | (daughter responding: this is 'A')                  |
| Daddy:    | <i>ola ti riye?</i> | (daddy pointing at 'D' and asking: what is that?)   |
| Daughter: | <i>ola ri</i> 'D'   | (daughter responding: that is 'D')                  |

This way, while the child is concentrating on the **learning** of English **alphabet** which is the essence of the **assignment**, she is equally getting herself familiar with expressions in the parents' language which is Igede.

### *The Government*

In Nigeria, we have three tiers of government-the federal, state and the local government. Happily enough, education is one of the few functions shared by all tiers of government since it is contained in the concurrent list of the nation's constitution. There is a need for concerted efforts by governments at all levels to revive the mother-tongue from its comatose condition.

Lee-Wolf (1976) extensively discusses the relationship between language and culture and thus exposes the ever-inseparable interdependency between the two. Every language education policy must take into consideration the value of this relationship. However, for the nation to overcome the present situation, government's involvement must go beyond policy formulations. Below are some useful suggestions for practical steps for the federal, states and the local governments, a multi-faceted though:

- a. *Policy formulation:* There has to be a deliberate and conscious effort to fashion out a mother-tongue education policy fused into the curricula of schools at both the primary and secondary levels. The policy should make it mandatory for every child, upon enrolment, to indicate what his/her mother-tongue language is which they must sit, write and pass both spoken and written examinations on before progressing to the next academic level. Public examinations like the first school leaving certificate examination (or its equivalence), the National Examinations Council and the West African Examinations Council (or their equivalences) must incorporate *mother-tongue test* (MTT) as a *special paper* (SP) in all their examinations. This



will go a long way to highlight the emphasis placed on mother-tongue education by the federal government. Cumbersome and difficult, isn't it? No, not so difficult especially now that we have computers and internet services. The advantages these new technologies (ICTs) provide can be leveraged on to accomplish this objective. This is why it is called a 'special paper' (SP).

- b. *Establishment of Language and Cultural Centres (LCC)*: Establishment of language and cultural centres, villages and communities as the case may be by federal, states and local governments respectively will help a great deal in not only providing relevant study materials, but also in stimulating youths' interest in the knowledge of local languages. I am aware of the existence of the Centre for Black and African Languages but more of such centres are needed. These centres should be adequately funded and provided with relevant language learning materials. Also trained and qualified linguists should be hired to develop and make available Orthographies, Dictionaries and tonal-standardizations for Nigerian languages. This will enhance documentations and literary writings in these languages. Furthermore, historians and anthropologists should be engaged to help recreate African and Nigerian artifacts in both solid and written form for an in-depth study of Nigerian heritage.

Private individuals and schools can take advantage of these centres by arranging excursions and leisure visits to such places. Students can be asked to take a diary of such trips in their own languages, organize dramas, play-lets, short stories, etc., all in their mother-tongues. This will, no doubt, promote and enhance sustained general interests in the local languages.

- c. *Organization of Nigerian Annual Language and Cultural Day*: We have highlighted earlier on the deep relationship between language and culture, (see Lee-Wolf 1976). Organizing such annual events like the one being proposed above will further help to crystallize public belief and participation in local languages and cultural activities. At the national level, such grand celebrations could be called, *national languages and cultural day* to be held annually. At the state level, it could be labeled as *state languages and cultural day* while at the local level such could be tagged *local languages and cultural day*. However, different dates within a calendar year could be chosen by states and local governments for their celebrations. This way, any state or local government that wants to attend another's *day* to witness and possibly benefit from innovations that they may observe in the course of attending could have the opportunity to do so. These kinds of events will provide opportunity for adults, women, youths and children to show-case cultures, talents and creativities. As suggested elsewhere (Odey, 2014:33), debates, legendary stories, songs, story-telling, jokes, tongue-twisters, folk-lore and so many other verbal challenges can be arranged for youths, children and adults using native languages. What we are suggesting here is very similar to what the Iggede people of Benue State are doing using their annual new yam festival celebration popularly known as 'Iggede-Agba'. This historical festival of the Iggede people of Nigeria is usually an

occasion of lavish celebration when the people gather to thank their God for seeing them through to the next harvest season. The celebration is usually characterized by sundry cultural display of dance, songs, anecdotes, dressing, costumes, masquerading, eating, teaching of table-manners and much more. However, in modern times, innovations have been introduced whereby youths and adults alike engage in verbal challenges in Igede language. This novel practice can be borrowed by other nationalities to foster unity as well as promote love for the mother-tongue.

- d. *Institutionalization of Awards and Honours*: Governments can further encourage and promote the development and use of native languages by way of introducing awards and honours for men and women who contribute their quotas to the development of native languages. When people write books, (primers, arithmetic, poems, novels, short-stories, songs or jingles) in local languages, such people should be recognized and rewarded periodically by way of public commendations, issuance of plaques of honour and cash rewards in order to further encourage an increased production of materials for the local languages.
- e. *Assignment of Roles to Local Languages*: One of the most obvious reasons why the local languages (or MT) are *dying* is because they are becoming less and less functional in our day to day lives. In other words, we have consciously or unconsciously withdrawn what role these languages were made to perform in our lives hitherto. The faster way to kill a language is by speaking it less or not at all. At home (even in labour, the first language a child hears is PUSH, PUSH, PUSH... English), people prefer to use English for all reasons. On the streets, English is equally spoken by people to one another because our society has become increasingly urbanized and globalised making it inevitable for people from different socio-linguistic and cultural backgrounds to co-habit and interact. Little is therefore left for our local languages to perform since even in our local media, school system as well as worship centres and the rest... are equally dominated by English language. The fact of the matter is that nature abhors vacuum, any language that is abandoned to disuse will suffer from a disease called *atrophy* and will eventually die or go into utter extinction. People and governments should therefore take the under listed curative actions in order to revitalize African culture and the mother tongues and prevent them from slipping into everlasting oblivion:
  - i. *Use in the media*: This is one of the most powerful ways native languages can be promoted and popularized because of its ability to inform, educate and entertained. All or some of the followings are useful channels local languages can be applied to function:
    - in television (broadcast media)
    - in film productions
    - in radio broad casting services

- 
- in the print media (newspapers, magazines, etc.).
- ii. Use for Enlightenment and Education:
- for awareness campaigns
  - political campaigns
  - for orientation purposes
  - for dissemination of guidelines & instructions on social matters etc

In addition, departments of languages and linguistics of tertiary institutions should be encouraged to offer courses in local and Nigerian languages. In this regards, Benue state University is taking a lead with the introduction of Tiv, Idoma and now Igede languages as elective courses in the Department of Languages and Linguistics. Other institutions that have not done so, should follow the Benue State University example.

- f. *Establishment of Printing Press:* At present, we know that well over 90% of the printing presses in the country do not have machines adaptable for local languages alphabet. There is a need therefore to introduce new machines with special features (including diacritic signs) that will cater for the local languages just as there is also a need to establish new printing presses to handle publishable works in these languages.
- g. *The Role of NGOs, Professionals and Philanthropists:* In the course of treating other aspects of this work, we have highlighted the part educational institutions should play-they are to boost interest in the study of local languages by introducing such courses in their relevant departments. Non-governmental Organizations, Professional language scholars and well-meaning citizens also have their quotas to contribute. These can come in the following ways:
- i. *The professionals:* The professionals in this case refer to linguists and researchers who have undergone requisite trainings in the study of language. These people can help the society develop important learning materials such as orthographies, dictionaries, primers and other reference books for the enhancement of language learning.
- ii. *The Philanthropists and Public-Spirited Individuals:* Resuscitating the mother-tongue requires an encyclopedic approach. It is on this basis that this paper places a demand on every facet of the society. NGOs, philanthropists and well-meaning individuals can contribute their quota by instituting endowments and prizes for best performing students in local language courses. They can also sponsor annual languages day (like the ones suggested earlier on) annual lectures, and other intellectual under-takings to encourage popular participation of youths and adults alike.

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## **4. The Use of Nigerian Languages in Radio Broadcasts**

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The role of the media, especially, radio, in the development and the preservation of language cannot be over-emphasized. It is in view of this that the study tries to identify Nigerian languages that are used in radio broadcast in Nigeria. The study finds out that only 135 Nigerian languages are used in radio broadcasts. This means that less than one-fourth of the Nigerian languages are used in radio broadcasts. Of these languages, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba languages do have considerable airtime and the remaining ones grappling with limited air time as they are used for token programmes only. On the other hand, however, English language dominates the scene with greater airtime, especially, in the some parts of Southern Nigeria with Hausa dominating the airtime in some parts of Northern Nigeria. The study uncovers that a plethora of minority Nigerian languages have never been used in radio programming. However, in an effort to prevent these languages from the unwanted, especially in this era when languages are dying at a pace that makes most minority languages likely targets, the study recommends that they be used in radio broadcast to ensure their maintenance, preservation, visibility and domain expansion.

### **1. Background**

In Nigeria, today, it is rare to find a radio station that broadcasts in a minority Nigerian language. This situation is not much different in radio stations where minority Nigerian languages are not used in most radio stations, especially in multilingual minority states. This is despite the fact that Broadcasting Policy for Nigeria ([http://nigeriacommunityradio.org/broadcast\\_policy.php](http://nigeriacommunityradio.org/broadcast_policy.php)) provides that: “indigenous language should have a quota on all sub-sectors of broadcasting”, National Communication Policy (1990 section 7.16) states that “All information dissemination sources shall use the local language of the audience of the receiving group to promote understanding and enhance national mobilization”, Cultural Policy for Nigeria (1988 chapter 8) states that: ‘The State shall promote... the production of programmes in Nigerian languages’ and section 21 of the 1999 constitution states that: “the state shall promote and protect Nigerian culture”. The government’s obligation in Section 21 of the Constitution to promote Nigerian culture could be understood as a duty to promote languages. In reality, however, these are hardly implemented. In areas where the Nigeria’s three major languages-Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba- are spoken, the radio stations generally use them together with English language and the remaining minority languages of the area are hardly used in radio broadcast. And in areas where the Nigeria’s network languages are spoken, they also dominate the airwaves with some select state languages.

What has been the effect of the marginalization of minority Nigerian languages in the media? For a very long time, linguists have condemned the non-use of minority Nigerian languages in radio programming in Nigeria. Nwagbara (2013) notes that



complaints abound on how some segments of the population are neglected in the daily operations of the media. These include: the physically challenged, minorities of all sorts, particularly, the linguistic minority groups, women and sometimes the elderly. Of all the forms of marginalization available in the media, the aspect of language seems the most worrisome. She remarks that:

One cannot but see the danger Nigeria faces as a nation in terms of the possibility of the death of several indigenous languages in the country.... in Akwa Ibom State, Ibibio is also the only indigenous language used for news presentation in NTA Uyo, to the neglect of the other nine languages spoken in the state. Bayelsa State has 30 languages. Only Izon is ... predominantly used in the broadcast media for news presentation. Nembe, Epie and Ogbia could sometimes be used in the media too. Cross River State has the highest number of languages (37) among the states chosen for this research. Only Efik is ...and mainly used in the media for news presentation. Other indigenous languages used for the same purpose are Bekwarra and Ejagham. Rivers State has a total of 21 languages... and only three – Ikwerre, Khana and Kalabari are used in the media for news presentation (Nwagbara 2013:158).

Nwagbara (2013) then recommends the use of the use of minority languages in the media noting that “the emancipation in this case comes in the form of giving these marginalized languages more opportunities in... and in the media. Their continuous exclusion could lead to the loss of those languages. Thus, Bamgbose (2007:13) sees this as a challenge to Nigerian linguists, and adds that, our social responsibility is to ensure that more Nigerian languages are used in the media.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Although the Broadcasting Policy for Nigeria, National Communication Policy (1990), Cultural Policy for Nigeria (1988) and Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 provide for the use of local languages in the media, radio broadcast inclusive, observations in many radio stations across the Nigeria reveals that these provisions are hardly implemented. More alarming, observation of the languages shows that their domains of use are restricted to their areas only. One then wonders if the media, radio in particular, appreciates the importance of indigenous languages in broadcast as well as the role of the radio broadcast in the preservation and promotion of indigenous languages.

### **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to find out if language use in radio broadcasts in Nigeria conformed to the provisions of Broadcasting Policy for Nigeria, National Communication Policy (1990), Cultural Policy for Nigeria (1988) and Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999. These provisions are that, all information dissemination sources shall use the local language of the audience of the receiving group to promote understanding and enhance national mobilization and the state shall promote... the production of programmes

in Nigerian languages. In addition, the study sought to find out the pro and cons of using indigenous languages in radio programming. It makes a clarion call on the radio stations across the nation to create space and airtime for the minority Nigerian languages in their programming to save them

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. To what extent do radio stations in Nigeria use indigenous Nigerian languages in their broadcasts?
- ii. In what kind of programmes do radio stations in Nigeria use indigenous Nigerian languages?
- iii. What number of indigenous Nigerian languages do they use in their broadcasts?
- iv. What is the link between the use of indigenous Nigerian languages in radio broadcasts and the survival of indigenous Nigerian languages?
- v. What is the fate of the indigenous Nigerian languages not being used in radio broadcast?

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

In an era when it has been predicted that at least half of the about 7,000 languages spoken across the world today may no longer be spoken by the end of this century (Austin and Sallabank 2011), the non-use of indigenous Nigerian languages in radio broadcasts cannot be overlooked. This is more so when several studies have shown that many Nigerian languages are already endangered. For instance, in Nigeria, the following languages, according to (UNESCO.org) in Johnmary (2012), have become moribund with few elderly speakers; Bete, Bubbure, Camo, Fali of Baissa, Fam, Holma, Kiong, Kudu, Mbaru, Njerep, Odut, Shan, Sheni, Undu Rishi, Yangkam and Ziriya. Again, Defaka, Fyam, Ilue, Jala, Ju, Kubu, Lere Cluster, Luri, Ngwaba, Okorogbana, Shiki and Somyewe have become seriously endangered language, which the young people that speaks them have reached or passed middle age. Ugwoke (1998:14-20), according to Johnmary (2012), had earlier presented a comprehensive list of indigenous Nigerian languages that are endangered. The main significance of this study, therefore, is that it will alert the governments, the radio managers, the Nigerian public, the Nigerian linguists and all other stakeholders in language and communication of the great danger posed to the survival of Nigerian languages by their neglect and marginalization in the media, particularly, radio broadcasts.

### **1.5 Methods and instruments**

Programme schedules of many radio stations were studied and identified the languages they use. Verbal interviews via phones were done with some radio stations managers. A documentary survey was used where different works conducted were used to identify the languages being used in radio broadcasts in Nigeria.

## 2. Radio in Nigeria

The history of radio broadcasting in Nigeria is well-documented in the literature that I do not need to repeat any part of it here. For detail, see Ladele *et al* (1979), Moemaka (1981), Mytton (1996) and Larkin (2008). Although Nigeria has a long history of radio broadcasting that dates back to 1932 when the BBC inaugurated its overseas service (Ladele *et al* 1979), indigenous Nigerian languages were not employed in radio broadcast till 1948 following Bryn and Turner recommendations which provided for Studio Centres in Lagos, Ibadan, Kaduna, Enugu and Kano, with broadcasts from 15-30 minutes daily in nine indigenous Nigerian languages and Arabic. These languages are: Hausa, Fulani (sic), Ibo (sic), Yoruba, Kanuri, Edo, Ibibio and Efik and then Arabic (Ladele *et al.* (1979). This marked the beginning of the use of Nigerian languages in radio broadcasting in Nigeria. Brann (1995) captures this triglottic configuration of the language use in radio as follows: Hausa, Fulani (sic), Ibo (sic) and Yoruba on national programme; while at regional level Eastern Province from Enugu had Ibo, Ibibio and Efik and Northern Province from Kaduna had Hausa, Fulani and Kanuri; whilst the local programmes from Lagos were in Yoruba, Edo, Igbo and Hausa: the local programme in Kano city used Hausa and Arabic. This arrangement was carried over by the subsequent NBS, the Nigerian Broadcasting Service, from 1952. The FRCN Edict of 1979, according to Mohammed (2008:51) reshaped the linguistic policy in the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation that under paragraph 15: “establishes zones and zonal boards”. Accordingly, four zones were established by the Decree to determine the “responsibilities, linguistic and other related matters. The zones were:

- a) Lagos zone with English and three Nigerian languages viz.: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba,
- b) Kaduna zone with English, Hausa, Kanuri, Fulfulde and Nupe,
- c) Ibadan zone with English, Yoruba, Edo, Igala and Urhobo,
- d) Enugu zone with English, Igbo, Izan, Efik and Tiv.

The then zonal linguistic policy reflected twelve network languages whose number kept increasing with the politico-administrative development of the country i.e. creation of states where each state has its own network languages or languages that would cater for the local broadcasting services. Presently, Nigeria has a two-tier broadcasting system comprising of public/state broadcasters and the private/commercial ones with the third tier, community radio, rearing its head at snail speed, for only Jigawa and Bauchi States have now keyed into it. Public radio stations are of two types; they are federal and state governments’ owned. The Federal government’s owned are divided into four, namely: the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) national station in Abuja known as Radio Nigeria, FRCN regional stations in Kaduna, for the Northern Region; Enugu, for the Eastern Region and Ibadan, for the Western Region and the FM radio station across the states and the external arm for international broadcasting. The 36 states of Nigeria also have their various radio stations with some having two stations i.e. AM and FM stations at the same time, with Jigawa and Bauchi states having ten stations each across various local governments, which

are now seen as community radio stations. Then, the private commercial stations, which hit the waves in the 1990s and gradually springing across the nation in recent years and bring to an end the state-controlled monopoly that existed before. The national station broadcasts mainly in English; the regional stations broadcast in the major and network languages of the regions, but alternate them with English language, the state radio stations also use some of the state languages with English having considerable airtime. While most of the private radio stations mainly broadcast in English, especially in the Southern part of Nigeria and their Northern counterpart use indigenous languages, but alternating with English.

Radio is the most popular mass medium in Nigeria (UNDP 2010). As of July 2009, Nigeria boasted of 180 radio stations among which Federal government of Nigeria owned 40, State governments 88 and 52 are privately owned by individuals. However, of these, 20 were non-functional with state governments' own having 15, private 4 and Federal government 1 (NBC 2009). However, these cannot be said to be the exact numbers of radio stations in Nigeria as the regulatory body in Nigeria, Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation, is always issuing licenses to the qualified applicants. For instance, in 2011 the following FM radio station hit the airwaves: Dala FM 88.5 Kano, Rahama FM 97.3 Kano, Wazobia FM and Cool FM Kano, Libeerty FM Kaduna. In 2012, Bauchi state government established 12 community stations in various local government areas. In 2013 the following stations Ray Power FM Maiduguri and Ray Power Bauchi and Freedom Radio Kaduna were established and in 2014 Space FM Ibadan hits the airwave.

### **3.0 What is the Apt Language to Communicate with?**

Language is the major tool with which the mass media carry out their daily operations. In fact, language is the mainstay of mass communication (Nwagbara 2013). Many scholars are of the opinion that indigenous languages are ideal for mass communication Nwuneli (1986) and Ibitoye (2000). Nwuneli (1986:203) posits that the indigenous language of a community is the best suited for the purpose of conveying any message, whatsoever, to the said community. Apart from creating more awareness to the audience while using their local language which prompts these scholars to support the use of local languages in communication, I hasten to add that using local languages in radio broadcast in Nigeria is more likely to unify the various communities, especially now that many communities in Nigeria are at each other's throat, and unity is a necessary ingredient for development in any nation. Chibita (2006:238) maintains that "giving people a voice in their own languages brings ordinary people into the arena of public discourse, and the broadcast media today play a key role in constituting this arena. Once in this arena, people are better placed to have a say in public debate on issues that touch on their governance and their general well-being". By using the indigenous languages, the governments and various development agencies will have a smooth delivery of their policies and programmes to the audience, since according to Nnuwelli (1986:203) Nigerian audience prefers the local language to any high sounding English or French language. In fact, the preference, appreciation and regard for native languages is not peculiar to Nigerians alone, but to most of Africans as Ngugi (1993) writes: "What prevented our languages from being completely

swallowed up by English and other oppressor languages was that the rural and urban masses, who had refused to surrender completely in the political and economic spheres, also continued to breathe life into our languages and thus helped to keep alive the histories and cultures they carried. The masses of Africa would often derive the strength needed in their economic and political struggles from those very languages. Thus, the people of the Third World had refused to surrender their souls to English, French, or Portuguese". In this regard, Bamgbose (2003:84) notes: 'The test of the efficacy of the media for empowerment should be how far they can reach the widest audience possible, and obviously, this must involve the intensive use of African languages'. This is apparently what the Nigerian does not seem to come to term with in view of the fact only few Nigerian languages are used in radio broadcasts in Nigeria. And in doing this, no much difficulty will be encountered, since "one can do anything with any language given enough time" (Banjo and Unoh, 1976: 58). What this tries to show is that any language, no matter how small, can be used for any interaction provided there is a strong will to do so. This means that not only major languages in any community should benefit from being used in different domains; smaller languages should also be paid attention.

#### **4. The State of Nigerian Languages in Radio Broadcasting in Nigeria**

Nigerian languages can be said to be playing second fiddle as far as their use in the media in Nigeria is concerned. Numerous studies have acknowledged the dominance of English in Nigerian media Salawu (2006 and 2012), Oladele (2006), Nwagbara (2013) and Danladi (2013). This is, due largely, according to Bamgbose (2011), as a result of imposition of colonial powers' languages in each territory they governed as the language of administration, commerce and education. To these may be added communication. Adding his voice on this, African languages generally, according to Salawu (2012), are suffering neglect due to the historical fact of colonization and, perhaps, lack of cultural pride among most Africans. This may be why the languages are not used in the media to disseminate information to the Africans. Hence, Because of the fact that broadcasting started with English in Nigeria and adoption of English as official language in Nigeria in 1947 (Salawu 2012:38), English has always been having greater space and air time in radio broadcasting in Nigeria. Bamgbose (2011) observes that "the language of the colonial power was dominant and African languages took a secondary position in status and domains of use'. This is evident in Nigeria where English language surpasses Nigerian languages as far as communication is concerned. In most African countries, Bamgbose (2011:7) observes that, "communication between the governed and those who govern is supposed to be done through an imported official language. The fact that such mode of communication excludes the majority of the governed is strong reason for empowering African languages for official purposes". In this case, also, Nigeria is a case in point. Governments in Nigeria communicate to the masses in English language. Government's notices and announcement are usually delivered via the Radio Nigeria and the Nigeria Television Authority, both of which exclusively broadcast in English. Even with the FRCN Regional Stations in Kaduna, Ibadan and Enugu as well as the FRCN FM stations across the nation, the situation is not much different as they only broadcast in the major and network languages of their various



region and states alternating them with English. Of all the FRCN regional stations, only Radio Nigeria Kaduna and Karama FM Kaduna among the FRCN FM stations, broadcast exclusively in Hausa. In fact, Ekweme (2011) reports that in FRCN Enugu, Igbo language does not get over 20% of airtime. However, among the state governments radio stations only Radio Lagos 107.5 F.M known as ‘Twantitan’, (Oyero 2011:46), exclusively broadcasts in Nigerian language, Yoruba.

One area, therefore, that needs to be addressed in radio broadcasting in Nigeria, is the language use. The radio programmes are all in English and major and network languages. However, the English language programmes surpass the other Nigerian languages by far in some parts of Nigeria. For instance, Onukaogu (2002) in Salawu (2004b), cited in Salawu (2006:13), noted that the media in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states are no longer giving prominence to the local language known with that area, Efik. According to him, out of a total of 7,560 minutes expended in broadcasting in the week, only a total of 425 minutes is allocated to the indigenous language, leaving a total of 7.135 minutes for programmes in English. This translates to 5.6 percent for local language and 94.4 percent for English. Salawu (2006:13) also notes that FM stations in Nigeria are almost exclusively for English language. Ekwueme (2011) reports that, radio and television stations, in the Igbo-speaking areas of the country devote less than 20 per cent of their airtime to Igbo programmes. He laments that despite the preponderance of media outlets to wit: states, federal and privately owned in the Igbo heartland, Igbo language does not receive enough attention in programmes, space and time. For instance, at the FRCN Enugu for instance, there are just 20 Igbo language programmes out of which only Ka Oha Malu (an audienceparticipating programme) lasts up to one hour. In fact, most of them are 15-minute programmes. Of course, just 20 programmes in a week translate into an average of three programmes per day though some of them are repeated within the week or have two editions. Matters are no better at Imo Broadcasting Corporation, Owerri. The number of Igbo-language programmes at the station is very poor compared to the galaxy of English language programmes in the station. Besides being too few in number, the airtime allocated to each of the Igbo programme is hardly more than 15 minutes. All the radio stations in the other three remaining states fare no better. Oyero (2011:46) reports that “of the 32 licensed radio stations in South-west Nigeria, federal and state governments own 9 stations each, while about 14 stations are privately owned; the programmes on the private stations are broadcast predominantly in English language, while some of the federal and states' owned stations give a number of their programmes in indigenous languages and dialects. It is only Radio Lagos 107.5 FM (Tiwan-n-tiwa) that broadcasts all its programmes in indigenous language”.

However, this is with exception to many states in northern Nigeria where Hausa language surpasses English language in radio programmes. In Kano state, for instance, Garba (2014a) shows that the use of Hausa language in radio programming is checkmating the dominance of English as respondents preferred Hausa language than English language programmes which shows that English is no longer in the same dominant position it occupied in the radio programmes of the other parts of Nigeria. Thus, Hausa language takes prominence over the English language in news and programmes broadcast on radio. To

further show the dominant of Hausa language in radio broadcast in Northern Nigeria, analysis of the programmes schedules of radio stations domiciled in Kano and Jigawa States for the fourth quarter of 2011 shows that, of the languages of broadcast in radio stations of these states namely Arabic, Hausa, Fulfulde, English, Epira and Hindi, Hausa language stands out with the highest airtime. Example, Hausa has the amount of airtime in the following radios. Rahama Radio, Kano, 87%; Pyramid Radio Madobi, Kano, 74%; Freedom Radio, Kano, 55%; Radio Kano AM 88.2% and Radio Jigawa, Dutse, 82%. Programme schedules of Rima Radio (AM) Sokoto for the fourth quarter of 2013 shows that Hausa had 85% of the airtime. So also the programme schedule of Zamfara Radio, Gusau, for the third quarter of 2013 reveals that Hausa language programmes had 83% of the airtime.

Airtime distribution in the Freedom Radio 99.5 FM, Kano, a private radio station, for the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter October-December 2013 reveals that Hausa language programmes got 77.07%, English language 18.34%, Arabic 3.29%, Egbira 0.92%, Pidgin 0.37%. Airtime distribution in the Radio Kano 730 AM, Kano state government owned radio, for the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter October-December 2013 shows that Hausa language got 77.65%, English language 8.42%, Arabic 12.85% and Fulfulde 1.06%. Airtime distribution in the Pyramid Radio 103.5 FM, Kano, an FRCN FM station owned by Federal Government of Nigeria for the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter October-December 2013, shows that Hausa language got 70.68%, English language 24.06%, Arabic 2.83%, 1.46%, Yoruba 0.63% and Fulfulde 0.32%. In relation to the considerable airtime given to Hausa in radio broadcasts, Garba (2014a) notes that the radio managers have come to term with the fact that the use of Hausa language in radio programming has attracted people to listen to radio programmes enthusiastically. Other nucleus of the rabid lust for Hausa radio programmes include the better understanding of the radio messages and the natural liking of the language by its speakers. Hence, the domineering posture of Hausa language in radio broadcasts of many radio stations in Northern Nigeria. The pride, likeness and loyalty Hausa speakers have for their language attracts other researchers' attention. Taiwo (1976:408) remarks thus: "Among the Nigerian languages, the status of Hausa is relatively high in the Hausa- speaking areas and it is deliberately promoted. The emir usually speaks Hausa in his emirate (sic) even when he is fluent in English and his audience is English-speaking. Hausa is freely spoken in the offices and the shops, in some of which articles are labelled in Hausa. Road notices in towns are in Hausa. Generally there is some encouragement to learn Hausa. The Yoruba language is widely spoken in Lagos and the western states and parts of the Kwara state but no effort is made to promote its status. Igbo is in no better position". The problem of language apathy varies from one language group to another as identified by Samuel Uzochukwu, a retired Professor of Igbo language, in an interview with the Guardian (Nigeria) and published as an article in the newspaper issue of August 27, 2004, p.33, as quoted in Salawu (2006:10) that: "It is very painful that amongst the major ethnic groups (in Nigeria), only Igbo (sic) are the most apathetic about their language. That is very painful. In fact in a recent survey, those in Igbo land who are in favour of English should be used in many of their transactions are up to 85 per cent. In Yoruba land, are up to 75 per cent, while in Hausa land, they are merely 37.5 per cent. I mean if you translate this, it means then that the Igbo are the most

haters of their own language”. The explanation of this revered Professor has further emphasized how Hausa people appreciate their native language.

The foregoing discussion has shown the supremacy of English language over Nigerian languages in radio broadcasts in Nigeria. However, it is only in some states in Northern Nigeria that Hausa language is putting a strong resistance to the domination of English in radio broadcasts. In Nigeria alone, 130 radio stations use Hausa language in their broadcast (Garba forthcoming) and 409 radio stations use Hausa language in their broadcast globally (Garba 2014b). The alarming situation regarding this is where the two major Nigerian languages i.e. Igbo and Yoruba could not checkmate the dominance of English language in radio broadcasts in their geo-linguistic areas. If this happened to these major Nigerian languages, what then can be said to the network and ‘state’ languages, talk less of minority Nigerian languages? As we have earlier seen how Igbo and Yoruba languages are contending with limited airtime in radio broadcasting in their various target areas, majority of the Nigerian languages being used in radio broadcast are contending with limited air time and hence, used for token programmes only. In one of his works on the language choice and language allocation in Nigerian broadcasting services, Brann (1995) identifies two forms of allocations of air time on languages i.e. primary and secondary. By primary, a considerable time is given to some languages and less air time given to some which are secondary. For instance, Brann (ibid.) shows how Benue state radio, Radio Benue, Makurdi gives primacy to Idoma, Igala and Tiv and uses secondarily Bassa, Nkomo, Etulu and Igede. Furthermore, Mohammed (2008:57) shows how languages like Guduf, Mandara, Joghode, Waha and Dera are used in Borno state radio only for educational programmes while others like Fulfulde and Shuwa (Arab) and Marghi are used for education, entertainment and edification whereas Hausa, English and Kanuri are used for all the 4Es, i.e. education, entertainment, edification and enlightenment. From the examples above, we can see that Hausa, English and Kanuri get more air time in Borno state radio than the other languages. Similarly, Nasarawa Broadcasting service, according to its programme schedule of 2003 as quoted in Sarbi (2008:40) uses Eggon, Migili, Mada, Ghagi, Rindre, Alago and Affo to present news only and basically uses Hausa and English in the production and presentation of its programmes. The examples given above have testified to the fact that most of the languages listed above are only used for token programmes only. There is, therefore, a compelling case for enhanced status and roles of Nigerian languages in radio broadcast. Because, Uwajeh (2003:109) shows that the diminishing use made of the Nigerian languages is responsible for the marginalization of Nigerian languages in Nigeria.

## **5. Nigerian Languages in Radio Broadcasts in Nigeria**

Of all sub-Saharan states, Nigeria has the greatest ethno-linguistic wealth with conflicting figure from the Index of Nigerian Languages of 1976 which reports 396 and that of 1992 reports 540 languages registered (Brann 1995). Hence, Mohammed (2008) opines that there is no consensus on the exact number of languages in Nigeria, due to many factors that include the language nomenclatures and variety of differentiation. Whatever the case may be, Nigeria is a multilingual and multicultural society with a good number of

languages. However, the recent point of reference on Nigerian languages comes from Grimes (2000). Nigeria has over five hundred and fifteen (515) languages. Out of this languages, five hundred and five languages (505) are still living indigenous languages eight (8) are extinct, while two (2) are second languages (Grimes 2000:66). Of the eight (8) that are extinct, two (2) are found in Cross River South – Efut and Kiong (Offiong and Ugot 2012).

Investigating the linguistic situation in each State of Nigeria and the use of ‘state’ and local languages in each State Radio Corporation, Brann (1995) listed 86 languages used in radio broadcasts in Nigeria. Mohammed (2003) lists 13 state languages being used in Niger State radio service. Garba (2013) harnesses Brann and Mohammeds’ lists; and came up with 119 indigenous Nigerian languages being used currently in radio broadcasts in Nigeria.

The languages are: Abua, Affo, Afizare (Izarek), Agbo, Alago (Eloyi), Andoni, Angas, Avielle, Bade, Bahumono, Barba (Bariba), Basanya, Basa, Bassa, Bekwera, Benanci, Bette, Biase, Bini, Birom, Bokyi, Bole, Bura, Busa, Butanci, Bwatiye, Chamba, ciLela (Dakkarkarci), Dera, Diryanci, Duguranci, Dukkanci, Dunne (Lala), Edo, Efik, Eggon, Ejagham, Ekpeye, Ekpoma, Engenne (Epie), Esan, Etsako, Etulo, Fanganci, Fulfulde, Garamci, Geranci, Ghagi, Goemai, Gokana, Guduf, Gwandara, Gwari (Gbagi), Hausa, Higi (Kwame), Idoma, Igala, Igede, Igbira, Igbo, Ijaw, Ikwere, Isegbo, Isoko, Itsekiri, Ika, Ikea, Irigwe, Jaranci, Jarmanci, Jenjo, Joghode, Jukun, Kadara, Kaka, Kalabari, Kambari, Kamuku, Kananci, Kanuri, Kare-kare, Kariyanci, Khana, Kirfanci, Kwaranci, Kilba, Kolokuma, Koro, Kuteb, Mada, Mambila, Marghi, Mbembe, Mhaghawul (Sura), Michika, Migili, Miyanci, Mumuye, Ngamo, Nembe, Ngizim, Nkomo, Nupe, Ogba, Ogbia, Ogoni, Ogu, Okpamehri, Okrika, Osso, Otuo, Pa’anci, Ribinanci, Rindre, Sayanci, Siranci, Shiranci, Shuwa, Tangale, Tera, Tiv, Ukwani (Kwale), Urhobo, Uromi, Veree, Vintim, Waha (Laamang), Wandala (Mandara), Warjanci, Yalla, Yergam (Tarok), Yakurr (Loke), Yoruba, Zarma, and Zulanci.

The above languages are the indigenous Nigerian languages being used over the air in the radio broadcasts in Nigeria. From the number of these languages, we can see that only about one fourth of indigenous Nigerian languages are being used in radio broadcasts in Nigeria. The means that the majority of Nigerian languages, that constitute the minority group which also constitute the endangered languages, are bereft of the advantages languages derive via their use in media such as radio. The subsection that follows, talks about the importance of using a language in the media.

## **6. Importance of Language Use in the Media**

The importance of the media to the language(s) they use in delivering their messages cannot be overemphasized. This has been attested to by different linguistic and communication experts. Bamgbose (2007:13) notes that the media have a crucial role to play in the local and national system and it is heartening to see that Nigerian languages as well as Nigerian pidgin are being increasingly used for information dissemination. Such use involves language development; particularly vocabulary expansion. Nwuneli (1986:203) it also helps to develop them and ultimately prevent them from endangerment.



Jones (2014) notes that media have the potential to play an integral role in language maintenance and revitalization". Apart from reflecting the language evaluations of the society that broadcast media do, Bell (1983:29), they also play a multiple role – active as well as passive – in language standardization. Bell's assertion was testified by Peterson (1997) who notes that prior to the employment of Navajo language in radio broadcast; the language has no standard form. However, due to its use in radio, the Navajo language broadcasters and their audience are actively creating a standard through daily programs and subsequent spirited feedback, occasioned by offering suggestions by audience members on language use. If they hear you say something wrong, they'll come up and tell you, 'Don't you think it would be easier to describe it like this. This is helping to standardize the language. Brann (1995) corroborate this when he submits that "there is no doubt that the spread of broadcast reception in Europe has reinforced the standardization of such highly dialectical languages such as German and Italian, or even English and French". Prah (2005) argues that African-language FM broadcasts "are helping towards the growth and development of African languages". Some of the ways through which the radio broadcasts develop the languages, according to Prah (2005), are "linguistic borrowing, "the extension of semantic fields" and the "creation of new terminologies". It goes on to say that these stations are "helping to push up the aesthetic qualities of African languages" and that listeners are particularly sensitive to elegant and expressive language use (Prah 2005). This means that using Nigerian languages in the media, such as radio, will uplift their status, spread and preserve them. However, in the wake of these abundant opportunities radio holds for any language it broadcasts in, minority Nigerian languages are denied these golden chances as the radio broadcast has been skewed due to the predominant use of English and some indigenous Nigerian languages in Nigeria.

## **7. A Plea for the Minority Nigerian Languages**

In view of the above numerous advantages and roles the media play to the language(s) they use, it is necessary that, minority Nigerian languages, most of whom are endangered, for according to Ohiri-Aniche (2014), more than 400 Nigerian indigenous languages are endangered out of which 152 are on the verge of being extinct, be put to use in radio broadcast to keep them alive and save them from untimely death. Scholars such as Cormack and Hourigan (2007) and Kelly-Holmes et al (2009) are of the strong views that media in endangered languages are very vital in revitalizing them. This means that employing minority Nigerian languages in radio broadcast will be timely as Browne (1996:59) in Peterson (1997:215) rightly observes that "indigenous people around the world establish their own media "to preserve and restore an indigenous language, to improve the self-image of the minority, and to change the negative impressions of the minority that are held by members of the majority culture". Moriarty (2011:450) argues that endangered language media are of strategic importance in allowing all individuals access to cultural life. One of the difficulties for speakers of endangered languages adds Moriarty, is the lack of sufficient public arenas where they can come together and interact to feel part of a wider language-speaking community. Amezaga (2000) as quoted in Moriarty (2011:450) points out that the presence of Basque in the public sphere due to the advent of Basque-medium television



station ETB-1 following regional autonomy helped to consolidate a sense of Basqueness amongst the population in the post-independence phase. It can be argued here that, if the minority Nigerian languages are put into use in the media, radio in particular, they can also give their speakers more sense of belonging, get more access to public discourse, increase the usage of the language by its speakers and lead to language maintenance. Further proof of this is shown in Moriarty (2011) where the introduction of the Irish-language television station TG4 helps greatly in recovering the language. The TG4 serves as a catalyst for a new image of the language and for increased use of the language among younger generations. Cormack and Hourigan (2007) observe that endangered languages, traditionally, had little media exposure. This is the true situation of the minority Nigerian languages. In fact, most of them did not even come close to the media; talk less of having little media exposure. Cormack and Hourigan (ibid), however, recommend that they be introduced to media as it is particularly important. Hence, Moriarty (2011:447) notes that endangered language media and pop-culture can help to raise the status of the relevant language, aid corpus planning through the dissemination of new terminology, and encourage language acquisition by increasing language exposure in both public and private domains. Moriarty (2011:447) for instance, gives an example of how the broadcasting of the Wimbledon tennis champions on the Iris-language television channel led to the development of new terminology to deal with terms in the Irish language which have been subsequently taken up by the Irish language community.

Drawing instance from the above discussion, this study strongly, in view of the state of the minority Nigerian languages today and the threat they face, call for the radio stations in Nigeria- federal and state governments' and privately owned to create space and airtime for the various minority languages of their target areas with a view to uplifting their status and ensure their survival. If this is done, radio stations across the country can absolve themselves from the blame that can be put on them that they have helped in killing minority Nigerian languages for not using them in their programming. And this blame can be substantiated as majority of the minority Nigerian languages have never, for once, been used in radio broadcasts. Radio managers and some commentators may be quick to invoke arguments about the lack of space and airtime, multiplicity of the languages, cost and language development status as the possible reasons why all the minority Nigerian languages can be used in radio broadcasts in Nigeria. I will also be quick to tell those who may contemplate the possibility of using these languages in radio broadcast that the experience of South Africa; however, shows that strategies can be evolved to make communication feasible in several languages (see Prah 2006). To further show the possibility of doing this, a cue can be taken from the Ugandan State Radio, Radio Uganda, that currently broadcasts in 27 languages (Chibita 2006:241). On the cost, Prah (2006:14) reports that radio requires a low resource threshold for effective usage in any language. Brann (1995/2006:365) submits that the costs of language proliferation in broadcasting are no so prohibitive, as is the benefit to the psyche of the ethno-linguistic group. To this may be added the survival of the language. Another strategy that can be explored to accommodate all the minority Nigerian languages in radio broadcast is the establishment of community radio stations across rural areas in the country. By their nature and having

regard to the fact that they are designed to serve small communities, virtually all of them will have to be mandated to broadcast in Nigerian languages in their target areas. The establishment of community radio stations in Bauchi State by the State Government in 2012/2013 is heartening and the information coming from there as regard to language use in the stations is pleasing and can serve as a classical reference point to the possibility of engaging all the minority Nigerian languages in radio programming domain. For instance, at the Ningi Community Radio Stations 88.3 MHz (BRC Ningi), in Ningi LGA the following languages are used Butanci, Diryanci, Pa'anci, Shiranci, Warjanci and Kananci (Kanawa). In Kirfi Community Radio Stations 94.6 MHz (BRC Kirfi) in Kirfi LGA, uses Kirfanci among other languages, Alkalari Community Radio Stations 88.3 MHz (BRC Alkalari), in Alkalari LGA, uses Duguranci among other languages, Toro Community Radio Stations 89.1 MHz (BRC Toro), in Toro LGA, uses Ribinanci among others and Ganjuwa Community Radio Stations 94.8 MHz (BRC Kafin Madaki) in Ganjuwa LGA uses Siranci, Kariyanci, Miyanci, Benanci and Jarmanci among others. It is noteworthy that, prior to the establishment of these community radio stations, none of these languages, most of whom are endangered, have, for once, been used in radio broadcast. However, they are now being used, on daily basis, in radio broadcasts. This, therefore, shows that other minority Nigerian languages can have their ways in radio broadcasts, if the governments- federal and states, private individuals and non-governmental organizations decide to establish community radio stations across the nation. On language development status, however, this is an argument that does not hold much water. Because, whether a language has a developed or official orthography or not, it can still be used in radio broadcast as testified by Peterson (1997) on the use of Navajo language in radio broadcast.

From the above discussion, we can now see that with proper planning and political will from the parts of the governments, private individuals and non-governmental organizations, minority Nigerian languages can all be launched into a completely new domain- radio broadcast, which will uplift their status, enliven them and preserve them. More importantly now is the convergence that has just evolved in the media where most radio stations utilize new media platforms such as internet, facebook, twitter, youtube, google + skype and so on to deliver their programmes in verbal and written form. And should these minority Nigerian languages get their way into radio broadcasts, they can also get the chance to be used in these new media platforms used by the radio stations and this would greatly support them as Austin and Sallabank (2011) advocate harnessing of new media in support of endangered languages. Austin (2013:58) acknowledges the role played by advances in information, media, communication and archiving technologies in making possible the collection, analysis, preservation and dissemination of documentary records in ways which were not feasible previously. Similarly, employment of the minority Nigerian languages will help in their maintenance as Jones (2014) earlier corroborates that “at this critical time new technologies such as visual and aural archiving, digitisation of textual resources, electronic mapping and social media, have the potential to play an integral role in language maintenance and revitalization”.

**8. Conclusion**

This study has shown that most of the minority Nigerian languages have never been used in radio broadcast domain. The situation where the English language and other bigger indigenous languages are predominantly used in the mass media, radio in particular, at the expense of the minority languages will not augur well for the minority languages. Hence, the clarion call to employ these languages in radio broadcasts. Putting these languages into use in radio broadcast will greatly help in using them in their social and cultural context which will, at the time of need, support speakers and communities who wish to maintain their languages by providing documentation that could feed into revitalization efforts.

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## **5. Applying Systemic-Functional Linguistics to Safeguard Indigenous Genres**

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The exploration of the Systemic-Functional Linguistic (SFL) concept of genre in this paper demonstrates the existence of indigenous genres subsisted by the continuous survival of indigenous languages. By means of illustrations drawn from Tiv oral interactive discourse, the researcher explains the viability of subsisting indigenous genres as avenues of cultural expressions and the risk of their becoming extinct as a result of the inability of most bilingual Nigerians to utilise these genres in high formal traditional context such as traditional marriages, funeral inquest ceremonies amongst many other traditional oral interactive events. The researcher underscores the threat posed by increasing impact of economic forces brought about by globalisation on the Nigerian bilingual's ability to make use of these genres and advocates that linguistic research should intensify efforts to document these invaluable indigenous genres.

### **1. Introduction**

Inter-border interactions have been made astronomically possible by trends of globalisation at various levels. On the surface, the effects of globalisation on culture could lead to exposition of indigenous cultures to the wealth of external appreciation, but if such indigenous cultures are improperly positioned, such an exposition could actually lead to cultural extinction. Cultures have multifarious outlets for expression but the focus this paper focuses on language, more precisely genres; for the reason that if a language is endangered then the survival of the various genres expressed through that language are susceptible to extinction.

Genre simply defined is the particular form or pattern language assumes when it is used for a particular purpose in a particular social context, thus genre is language dependent. Hence if a language is endangered all its (i.e. the language's) subsisting genres are threatened. In *Language death*, Crystal (2002: ix) voices out the need for linguists to work towards preserving the endangered languages of the world in order to preserve, conserve and "to promote the new ecolinguistics". This situation is most especially worsened by the fact that the quest for economic enhancement is increasingly being associated with the ability to communicate in languages of wider communication such as English, French, Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba etc. In a recent study, Amano et al., (2014:9-10) suggest that "economic growth and globalization (...) are the primary drivers of recent language speaker declines ..., via associated political and educational developments and globalized socioeconomic dynamics [...]." This situation he further explains in greater graphic detail is more evident when "one language ... comes to dominate a nation's political and educational spheres"; forcing people "to adopt the dominant language or risk

being left out in the cold – economically and politically”. An accurate illustration to support the assertions of the preceding researchers is the Nigerian scenario. The high socioeconomic fringe benefits accruing to those who possess a mastery of the English language as well as other international languages such as French has placed monolinguals in an indigenous/mother tongue at a great disadvantage, most especially if the indigenous language is one of the lesser-ranged languages excluding the big three (i.e. Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo). Thus the bilinguals are better positioned, most especially if the second language is an international language such as the English or French language.

As the bilingual individual develops his or her language skills, the individual’s ability to communicate in both languages is subject to external dynamics such as formal learning opportunities: the language that is more often taught becomes the default lingua franca. Hence in Nigeria, for instance, there are millions of professionals who engage in vast discursive issues in the English language but become nervous when confronted with the opportunity to address a gathering in their mother-tongue. The issue is though such individuals may be able to carry out everyday interactions in their mother-tongue; their inability to use their mother-tongue to communicate at high-level formal context is a reflection of their lack of knowledge of the existing subsisting genres of their indigenous tongues. The confidence and near native competence acquired in the second language has eroded the mother-tongue equivalent. In a study using the basic variables of the Ethnolinguistic Vitality theory (EV), for instance, Alyebo (2013) reports of a low maintenance of the Tiv language in Makurdi metropolis and the nonchalant attitude of the Tiv people towards the gradual demise of the Tiv language.

The mastery of a language extends beyond a mere ability to construct correct expressions in the language to include an in-depth understanding of social undertones associated with the various forms of expressions and the appropriateness of their usages in a variety of situations. For instance, the various models defining Dell Hymes’ concept of communicative competence developed by namely Canale and Swain (1980 and 1981), Widdowson (1983) and Bachman and Palmer (1996) each accommodate the formal and functional nature of an individual’s ability to use language.

In the course of acquiring or learning any language, it is expected that the child should be exposed to adequate opportunities for mastering various registers and subsequently the generic frameworks that define language use in various situations. For instance, the teaching of various registers is very integral to most ESL programmes to the extent that by the time an individual undergoes formal education from the elementary to the tertiary levels he or she would have acquire a vast amount of registers and the ability to activate various genres given the appropriate social circumstances. On the other hand, the failure to implement the teaching of indigenous languages within the formal education system has led to the depreciation of the population of Nigerians that possess vast knowledge of the genres that constitute part of their culture.

Alyebo (2013:145) further reports that the Tiv language, for instance, occupies a very low status “outside the domain of the home”, at most “age grade, marriages and naming ceremonies, tribal and community meetings”, Tiv urban dwellers communicate in the English language. Thus when they attend similar events in the villages, where Tiv

language is the dominant lingua franca, these urban dwellers resort to the rhetorical skills of the rural dweller. “To an average Tiv man outside of his village setting”, Alyebo (2013:145) further states “it is not only fashionable and prestigious to communicate in English, but it also serves as a status symbol.” Such an individual as depicted by Alyebo exemplifies the bilingual individual who will be incapable of communicating in his or her native tongue traditional formal gatherings when the situation arises.

This paper argues for the recognition of the existence of indigenous genres from the perspective of the Systemic-Functional Linguistic Theory (subsequently SFL). It projects its position based on the perception of genre as a stage by stage order in which people use language in various social contexts as defined by culturally recognised conventions. Discussions target demonstrating that indigenous genres exist using the SFL approach and most especially the benefits deriving from the recognition of the existence of same and the importance of documenting and imparting such knowledge on the younger generation. The aforementioned goals are executed under the following sub-headings: the concept and analysis of genre in SFL, examples from Tiv, and the imperativeness of linguistic research on indigenous genres.

### **1.1 The Concept and Analysis of Genre in the SFL Approach**

The Systemic-Functional Linguistic (SFL) Theory originated from M.A.K. Halliday’s attempts to evolve a linguistic theory from his insights drawn from J.R. Firth’s System and Structure Theory in the late 1950s and the early 1960s. The theory, as it exists today, is a product of the continued works of Halliday and the contributions of several other scholars, especially R. Hasan, J.R. Martin, E. Ventola, C. Matthiessen, S. Eggins, J. Lemke amongst several others. The hallmark of SFL is the humanistic view of what language is and how it should be studied. From the view of language as comprising a multi-layered coding system comprising three strata: the semantic, the lexicogrammar, and the phonology, each related by realisation to a composite framework for projecting analysis of language from the text to its context and culture, SFL theory reflects the dominant philosophy of attaining the synthesis of the study of the form and content of language.

Accordingly, the central thesis of the SFL model acknowledges that the use of language as a social semiotic par excellence unfolds through three simultaneously operational systemiotic planes, which are, in order of ascent, the plane of discourse-semantics, the plane of register (immediate context of situation) and the plane of genre (context of culture). Operations on the plane of discourse-semantics are “double barrelled” (Eggins 1994:82), focusing on the expression of meaning at the level of the clause and/or clause-complex and beyond the level of the clause-complex to the creation of discourse which looks at the strategies for uniting clauses and clause-complexes in a text. The plane of register is the level for examining the relationship between the text generated on the discourse-semantics plane and the social context in which it is used for communication using the social parameters of tenor (relationship between participants in the interactive process), mode (the medium through which the interaction takes place) and field (the subject matter of the social interactive event). The analysis of genre seeks to establish the



connection between features of register and the surrounding culture i.e. the context of culture by determining if the stages in which the communicative event unfolds reflect a recurrent pattern that conforms to conventions laid down by the surrounding culture. The relationship between all three systemiotic planes is given alternatively in figure 1 below:

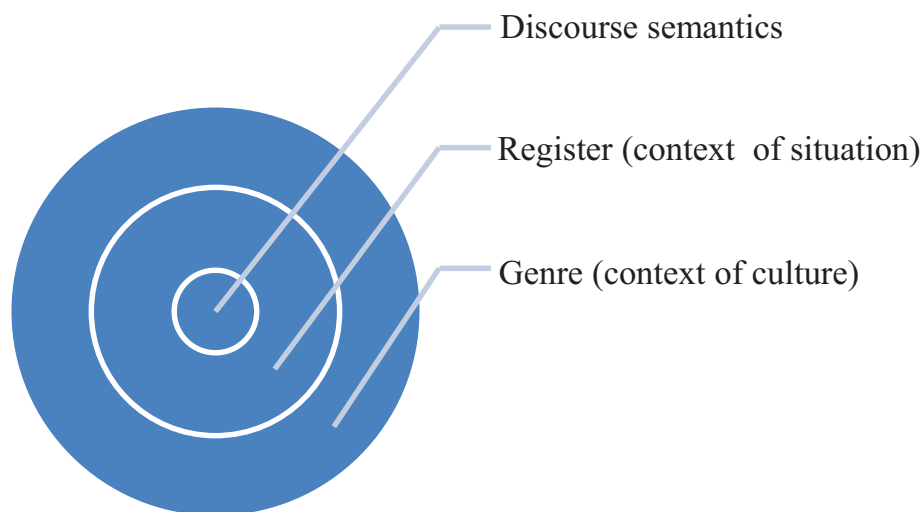


Figure 1: *SFL Systemiotic planes for analysing language use*

The relationship represented in figure 1 should not be construed as relaying operations which occur in isolation. In actual fact there is a diffusion of operations through which relationships between each systemiotic plane are established. At the point of discourse-semantics texts are constructed for communication; yet the operations within discourse-semantics do not occur in a vacuum, but in the midst of real social situations, which are the natural habitats of language. As such, the use of language to create or build text cannot be divorced from the sphere of human activity or experience; naturally, the influence of social parameters (tenor, mode and field) on the individual's choice of expression eliminates, perhaps, the thickness of the boundary between discourse-semantics and register. There are numerous registers reflecting various social circumstances under which people interact; for this reason, genre is all encompassing, providing the global template for describing how the "systems of social processes" marked by various instantiations of tenor, mode and field are realised in texts (Martin 2002:12).

Such "systems of social processes" (ibid) are embedded in a culture and are subject to the conventions deemed acceptable in that culture; on this basis, genre is regarded as the systemiotic plane which studies the cultural context in which a communicative event (as reflected through the text) unfolds. Genre is regarded as the configuration of the stages in which a social communication process unfolds (Ventola (1987), Halliday and Hasan (1989), Eggins (1994) and Martin (1997) and (2002)). These stages are usually laid down by communally established conventions for carrying out the respective social activity. On this basis, genre is regarded as the systemiotic plane which studies the cultural context in

which a communicative event unfolds because analyses at this stage consider culturally laid down conventions for conducting any social communication process.

The stages defining a social communicative event are deemed in SFL as comprising a schema, called the schematic structure of a genre. The schematic structure refers to the stage by stage organisation of genre. Accordingly, a social process is analysed into series of stages as the beginning, the middle and the end (Hasan 1989). In real circumstances these general terms (i.e. beginning, middle and end) bear functional labels of the nature of the activity going on at each particular stage in the event. Demonstrations of the preceding discussions are provided in greater detail under the next subheading.

### **1.2 Examples from the Tiv of North Central Nigeria**

The noun ‘Tiv’ is both the name of an ethnic group in North-Central Nigeria and the language spoken by this group. According to ratings and rankings in Nigeria, Tiv is a minority language with a smaller range of communication when compared with Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo. Various sources estimate the population of the Tiv people within the range of 2.5 to 5.5 million; such figures indicate the Tiv language is probably not threatened but the deep level indices show that in spite of the sizeable population of native speakers the language is in actual fact endangered. To recast the issues raised in the introduction, the present day Tiv bilingual may be incapacitated to communicate in high level traditional formal settings such as are evident in events of traditional marriages or funeral inquest ceremonies and other oral interactive events involving the community. Some of the physical settings under which these oral interactive discourses take place have been reported in Vande-Guma (2014); some are represented in the pictures below:



**Plate 1**

*Traditional Funeral Inquest at the Burial of Dooshima Pever at Tse-Pever, Adaká village Makurdi LGA, Benue State (Vande-Guma 2014:112)*

**Plate 2**

*Traditional Funeral Inquest at the Burial of Kwaghchimin Ugili at Tse-Ugilli Affiah Ukum LGA Benue State (Vande-Guma 2014:115)*

**Plate 3**

*Traditional Marriage of Martha Ikyam at Tse Ikyam, Tyoshin Gwer West LGA, Benue State (Vande-Guma 2014:115)*

Plates 1, 2 and 3, above, show the typical settings under which much of the traditional oral interactive discourses take place. When faced with the challenge of communicating in the settings such as depicted in the pictures above, many Tiv bilingual individuals, who have assimilated the English language as a default lingua franca become tongue-tied and rely on the rhetorical prowess of the so called ‘village illiterate’. The aforementioned scenario is



common amongst many Nigerian bilinguals whose livelihood is especially attached to their proficiency in the English language.

The term oral interactive discourse refers to the conversations generated during much of the high level formal communicative events such as negotiations for the bride at Tiv traditional marriages, *kém kwásé* (bit-by-bit negotiation for a wife) and deliberations at Tiv funeral inquests, *kú ú óròn* (talk about death) as well as several other instances involving intra/inter-communal/familial interactions (Vande-Guma 2014). These oral interactive discourses are some of the subsisting genres that are largely dependent on the survival of the Tiv language. Both traditional events i.e. the bit-by-bit negotiation for a wife and funeral inquest are very symbolic in Tiv culture for they reflect the Tiv concept of marriage and death.

Marriage in Tiv culture is regarded as a communal affair, a union between different families occasioned by the mutual consent between a man and a woman. This mutual consent only gains legitimacy when the families of the couple come together to grant consent to the union through the process of carrying out a bit-by-bit negotiation of the bride price. The funeral inquest portrays the Tiv concept that there is no natural cause of death as previous studies (Abraham (1940) and Ushe (2007)) attest to this fact. Thus, the funeral inquest ceremony is considered as a process of inquiry to find out the cause of the demise of a family member in order to prevent it from re-occurring in the family.

The physical settings depicted in the pictures i.e. plates 1-3 indicate that both traditional events depend on face-to-face interactions, hence they are termed traditional oral interactive discourses. During these interactions participants use the oral repertoires of expressions to communicate with each other. These modes of expressions are not usually learned from the pages of a book but through observation. However, it is not feasible for many people, especially people living in urban settlements, to have opportunities to observe and learn from these events. Therefore, there is a need for these traditional discourses to be studied using appropriate parameters and documented. These shall be shown to be traditional genres- according to the SFL notion- in the subsequent paragraphs. The corpora illustrated in the sub-sections, below, are drawn from a PhD research by Vande-Guma (2014) on Tiv oral interactive discourse, more precisely, language as it is used during the Tiv traditional funeral inquest *kú ú óròn* and the negotiations of the bride price *kém ú kwásé*.

### 1.2.1 Genre Patterns of the Tiv Traditional Funeral Inquest (*Kú ú Óròn*)

This is the face-to-face interaction between the maternal agnates of the deceased also known as the *ígbá* and the paternal kinsmen of the deceased called the *ìtyò*. The interaction usually precedes the interment of the deceased. According to Tiv tradition, it is wrong for the paternal kinsmen to bury the deceased without obtaining the formal explicit permission of the maternal agnates who are also their in-laws and must be present at the event. In any case, the interaction does not progress at random but in a clear and specific order. The inquest usually begins when the demand the *ígbá* demand to know why their in-laws, the *ìtyò* have invited them to their home, the cause of death amongst several other issues that

may arise. The outcome of the interaction could determine where the deceased would be buried: the paternal or maternal village. If the outcome is the latter, the surviving members of the deceased nuclear family could be taken away to the maternal village as well.

As previously pointed out, in the analysis of genre communicative events are analysed as occurring in stages, each indicating the phases undergone for the attainment of some social function. The stages are seen as comprising the schematic structure of the event. The nature of the communicative task fulfilled by each stage is construed from the utterances produced the participants in the event, for example the families of the bride and groom and the paternal agnates (*ityò*) and maternal kinsmen (*ígbá*) of the deceased. The line chart itemised in schema 1 exemplify the schematic structure of the interactions during the funeral inquest ceremony depicted in plate 1 (the abbreviation CT means conversational turns- the transcriptions of the corpus were segmented into CTs following conventions in conversational analysis):

**Schema 1:** *Schematic Structure for the Funeral Inquest during the Burial of Dooshima Pever (Vande-Guma 2014:123)*

- Call to order by the *Íshùà* CT 1\*
- A member of the *ígbá* demand for permission to speak CT 2–4
- The *ígbá* demand for the purpose of the invitation CT 4 –5\*
- The *ígbá* demand for the cause of death CT 6-9 \*
- The *ígbá* demand for more explanations CT 10 – 35\*
- The *ityò* accept guilt. CT 36 – 37 \*
- The *ígbá* reject the apology. CT 37 – 39
- The *ityò* repeat its apology. CT 40 – 46
- The *ígbá* demand to know why they were not informed about deceased's illness CT 47- \*
- The *ityò* appeal for understanding CT 58\*
- A member of the *ityò* challenges the *ígbá* CT 59
- The *ígbá* assert its supremacy over the *ityò* CT 60
- The *ityò* appeal for understanding CT 61 – 66
- The *ityò* make a peace offering (of a goat) to the *ígbá* by CT 70 –71\*
- The leader of *ígbá* recalls history of deaths and misfortunes in the family (i.e. the *ityò*) CT 73 – 78\*
- The leader of the *ígbá* demand for remaining siblings of the deceased CT 79\*
- The *ityò* withdraw to consult amongst themselves CT 80-86
- The witness of the *ígbá* amongst the *ityò* calls for handing over of Dooshima's siblings to the *ígbá* CT 87 – 89
- The head of the deceased family (i.e. the *orya*) Tsonough protests the decision CT 90 – 91\*



The stages highlighted with the asterisk (\*), in schemata 1 are obligatory elements because they are essential to the successful realisation of the discourse. These are the segments of the event which define the nature of the discourse. For instance, the opening turn (CT 1) is an announcement which calls the attention of both families to the event that is about to begin as follows:

- 1            Ēr mò    m      lù      héen   náhàn  
               As me    I        am     here   so  
               m ngù    ortyòtyèv    kpaà  
               I    am    foreigner    too  
               m ngù    òr      ū      zwá      Tív    kpaà,  
               I    am    man    of      language Tiv    too  
               ká m      nóngò mē    kwàgh    wám      ā      dòo    jè.  
               for I      try    that    thing    my        be      good   well.

As I am here like this, I am a foreigner but am also a Tiv man; I try to do my things properly (Vande-Guma, 2014: 176)

In data 1 the speaker prefers to express his intolerance of disorder, in another event (represented in schema 2) also reported in Vande-Guma (2014: 196) the *Íshùá* is more direct:

- 2            Í kùrà    vè,    í      húan      áyóosú            shió  
               Be enough then, be    still      noise              no more  
               ígbá                    vā,            ìtyò              háa nyá.  
               maternal agnates come            paternal kinsmen      fall down.

It is time, be silent, no noise, the matrilineal lineage is here, and the father's people are seated. (Vande-Guma, 2014: 196)

Both data 1 and 2 are indirect invitations to the maternal agnates to begin the inquest as the next CT is usually taken by a member of the *ígbá* who articulates the formulaic interrogative:

- 3            Ká            nyì    ī      èr            vé ,  
               It            what    that    happen      that,  
               ú            tíndì    wér    mo    m      và ?  
               you        sent    that    me    I      come ?

What has happened that, you have sent for me to come? (Vande-Guma, 2014: 176)

Data 3 is termed a formulaic interrogative because on the surface, these questions may seem superficial since the presence of the *ígbá* (maternal kinsmen) of the deceased at the funeral event shows that they (i.e. the *ígbá*) are already aware of the death of their sister's child (i.e. mother of the deceased). However, the *ígbá* are working on the assumption that their host i.e. the *ìtyò* (the paternal kinsmen) of the deceased understand the cultural significance of this question, an assumption that is readily verified by the *ìtyò* (the paternal kinsmen) through this response:

- 4           Ká           wan    wou  
               It (is)    child your  
               ù           yáŋge   ú       na    m       lá  
               that     day    you   gave   me     that  
               á           sāa    kú     vē  
               she     lost    death then  
  
               m    tíndi   mé   vā     yé.  
               I     sent   that come   then.

It is the child that you gave me, who has died, that is why I sent for you to come. (Vande-Guma, 2014: 176)

It is important to observe that while the maternal agnate's interrogative is more direct and assertive; the response of the paternal kinsman of the deceased is placid, provides the required details in plain terms and seeks to assuage the maternal agnate's irritation.

Between CTs 6 and 35 the attentions of the participants switch to unraveling the cause of death and finding an amiable solution to the problem. Expectedly the demands are articulated by the maternal agnates, who phrase their inquiries using an interrogative such as:

- 5           Náhàn, wánkwasè lá,  
               So,    child       that  
               á       gbā     ángév shīn,  
               she    fall     sick    or  
               ká     ásidenti ée ?  
               it     accident ?  
               So did she fall sick or it was an accident? (Vande-Guma, 2014: 176)

Again, the deceased paternal kinsmen have provided the requisite answer specifying the cause of death, in the following multiple clause-complexes:

- 6           Á   dūè                   ngù zéndèn,  
               she come out    is    walking  
               náhàn,   kú    ú     zá    kér   un    ye,  
               so,       death of    went caught her   then,

---

|          |         |            |            |      |      |        |       |
|----------|---------|------------|------------|------|------|--------|-------|
| náhàn,   | m       | tíndi      | mé,        | ì    | káa  | né     | yè,   |
| so,      | I       | sent       | that       | be   | told | you    | that, |
| gá       | yọ,     | né         |            | vā   | pīne | ér,    |       |
| not      | if,     | you-plural |            | come | ask  | that,  |       |
| ngù kpà, |         |            |            |      |      |        |       |
| is       | too,    |            |            |      |      |        |       |
| náhàn, m |         | ēr         | né         |      |      | yè,    |       |
| so,      | I       | tell       | you-plural |      |      | that,  |       |
| ngù      | zéndèn, |            |            |      |      |        |       |
| is       | walking |            |            |      |      |        |       |
| kú       | ú       | zá         | kér        | un,  | í    | híngir |       |
| death    | of      | come       | caught her |      | be   | become |       |
| ù mé     | ī       | yē.        |            |      |      |        |       |
| to me    | bury    | then.      |            |      |      |        |       |

She was away, going about, so death went and caught her, so I sent that you should be told or else, you will come and ask, “is she in ?”, so, I have told you that she was away going about, when death caught her, and now I have to bury[ her]. (Vande-Guma, 2014: 177)

In the context of the funeral inquest, the seemingly straight-forward answer in 6 cannot suffice due to the significance of the event, hence the maternal agnates probe further:

|   |           |      |         |        |
|---|-----------|------|---------|--------|
| 7 | Ú         | ôr   | dóo     | kpā,   |
|   | You       | talk | good    | but,   |
|   | kwàgh     | zā   | íyól    | kímì,  |
|   | something | is   | disturb | inside |
|   | kwàgh     | gbè  | lùn     | gà     |
|   | something | just | be      | not    |
|   | ángbiànev | áv   | mbàn    | mbá    |
|   | brothers  | my   | these   | are    |
|   | náhàn,    | ve   | kpa     | vea    |
|   | so,       | they | too     | they   |
|   | náhàn,    | vé   | wà      | zwà,   |
|   | so,       | they | put     | mouth  |
|   | vé        | mó   | kpā     | mé     |
|   | then      | me   | too     | I      |
|   |           |      |         | hear   |
|   |           |      |         | then.  |

You have spoken well but there is something disturbing about it, something doesn't just happen... my relatives are also here in your midst, they are also hearing you they shall also speak before I will listen [believe]. (Vande-Guma, 2014: 177)

With this utterance, the spokesman for the maternal agnate has issued a veiled accusation at the in-laws i.e. the deceased's paternal kinsmen, who in turn are required by traditional conventions to provide additional explanations, make appeals and ultimately accept their guilt and make amends. Such moves are usually realised in speeches tracing the history of relationships between families and communities, as illustrated below:

|   |        |        |        |       |        |  |  |
|---|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|--|--|
| 8 | Yáŋge  | têré   | m      | lù    | Saghév |  |  |
|   | Day    | father | my     | be    | Saghev |  |  |
|   | lun    | Saghèv |        | yà    |        |  |  |
|   | being  | Saghev |        | then, |        |  |  |
|   | ijír   | i      | Saghev | lā    | dóo,   |  |  |
|   | place  | of     | Saghev | that  | good,  |  |  |
|   | náhàn  | ì      | zá     | sôór  | kwásé, |  |  |
|   | so     | be     | went   | court | woman  |  |  |
|   | náhàn, | í      | káa    | ér,   |        |  |  |
|   | so,    | be     | said   | that, |        |  |  |
|   | í vā   | á      | nà.    |       |        |  |  |
|   | be     | come   | with   | her.  |        |  |  |

Previously, my father was at Saghev, as he was in Saghev, the place at Saghev was good, so a woman was courted and it was agreed that she be brought here. (Vande-Guma, 2014: 178)

The essence of these moves is to trace errors or bad judgements made by family members that could be the likely cause of the deceased's misfortunes. In expressing these moves, participants make use of traditional rhetorical conventions in order to maintain peace. This can also be observed in the declaration of the acceptance of blame by another member of the paternal family of the deceased:

|   |        |      |         |      |         |    |        |
|---|--------|------|---------|------|---------|----|--------|
| 9 | Eēn,   | ngù  | lá      | ù    | or      | ká | shamín |
|   | Well,  | is   | that    | you  | talk    | it | right  |
|   | úmàcé  | ēr   | shiòr   | ér,  |         |    |        |
|   | humans | make | proverb | that |         |    |        |
|   | nyínyā | ngù  | ángahár |      | ányiin, |    |        |
|   | horse  | is   | legs    |      | four    |    |        |
|   | jé     | kpà  | gbé.    |      |         |    |        |
|   | even   | but  | falls.  |      |         |    |        |

Yes, you have said so rightly, human beings have a saying that even though the horse has four legs, it does fall. (Vande-Guma, 2014: 186)

However, the maternal agnates are required by cultural expectations to assert their supremacy over the paternal kinsmen of the deceased. These points of the occasion are

equally crucial to the realisation of the objective of the interactive discourse. Hence CTs 47, 73-78 and 79 mark the climax of the event. For instance, in the 9, a member of the ígbá recalls the lacklustre attitude of the ìtyò to resolve a problem concerning the deceased in the past:

|    |            |        |         |          |        |       |      |      |       |
|----|------------|--------|---------|----------|--------|-------|------|------|-------|
| 10 | Yánge      | m      | móugh   | keen,    |        |       |      |      |       |
|    | Day        | I      | rose    | here     |        |       |      |      |       |
|    | m          | vā     | shīe    | ū        | genegh | lá,   |      |      |       |
|    | I          | come   | time    | of       | other  | that  |      |      |       |
|    | m          | kúà    | á       | wán      | nē,    |       |      |      |       |
|    | I          | went   | with    | child    | this   |       |      |      |       |
|    | m          | yēm    | à       | mìn,.... |        |       |      |      |       |
|    | I          | went   | with    | it....   |        |       |      |      |       |
|    | M          | kpēn   | tíndin, |          |        |       |      |      |       |
|    | I          | kept   | sending |          |        |       |      |      |       |
|    | ōr         | zè     | ga      | yó       | ér,    |       |      |      |       |
|    | person     | went   | not     | then     | that   |       |      |      |       |
|    | sāā        | ngó    | nā      | à        | zà     | iyól  | ná   | kéng | kéng  |
|    | unless     | mother | her     | she      | go     | self  | her  | must | must  |
|    | náhàn      | yangé  |         | ngó      |        | nā    | zè   | yó   |       |
|    | so         | day    |         | mother   |        | her   | went | then |       |
|    | shī        | í      |         | tōô      |        | wán   | nē,  |      |       |
|    | and        | be     |         | carried  |        | child | this |      |       |
|    | shī        | í      | na      | ú....    |        |       |      |      |       |
|    | and        | be     | give    | you....  |        |       |      |      |       |
|    | Yán        | í      | hīle    | héen,    | wán    | lá    | lù   | và   | zán   |
|    | Previously | be     | return  | here     | child  | that  | be   | come | going |
|    | shī        | hīle   | vā      | kpèn     | yè,    |       |      |      |       |
|    | and        | return | come    | died     | then   |       |      |      |       |
|    | kwàgh      | là     | ká      | gbénda   | wám    | gá!   |      |      |       |
|    | thing      | that   | it      | way      | my     | not!  |      |      |       |

A long time ago, I rose from my place and came and carried this child from here to my place.... I kept sending for any of you [i.e. the ìtyò] to come but nobody came, you insisted that her mother must come. So the day her mother came, I handed this child back to her and she came back and continued with her schooling, now she has died. This thing is not my way! (Vande-Guma, 2014: 191)

With this expression of distrust the ígbá then proceed to formally demand that the surviving children of their sister, who was the mother of the deceased, be handed over to them by the ìtyò:



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|    |     |      |     |           |       |      |      |        |      |
|----|-----|------|-----|-----------|-------|------|------|--------|------|
| 11 | Ì   | nà   | m   | kwàgh     | wām   | mbā  | vé   | shí    | lá   |
|    | be  | give | me  | something | my    | are  | they | remain | that |
|    | né  |      | kpā | né        | yā    | yùm  |      |        |      |
|    | you |      | too | you       | eat   | much |      |        |      |
|    | mó  |      | kpā | ì         | nà    | m    | mé   | zā     | yà   |
|    | me  |      | too | be        | give  | me   | I    | go     | eat  |
|    | ká  | cī   | wām | jé        | lá.   |      |      |        |      |
|    | it  | all  | my  | be        | that. |      |      |        |      |

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The remaining siblings that are alive should be given to me; you have enjoyed them too much, let me also go and enjoy the ones that are remaining, that is all that I want.

In the event of any resistance from the ìtyò, it is common for the maternal agnates to invoke the Tiv tradition with the following existential statement:

|    |                  |                  |      |                  |                   |      |
|----|------------------|------------------|------|------------------|-------------------|------|
| 12 | Ígbá             |                  | ngi, | ìtyò             |                   | ngi, |
|    | Maternal lineage | is,              |      | paternal lineage | is                |      |
|    | kpa              | ígbá             |      | hembra           | ìtyò.             |      |
|    | but              | maternal lineage |      | greater          | paternal lineage. |      |

The maternal lineage is, the paternal lineage is but the maternal lineage is greater than the paternal lineage. (Vande-Guma, 2014:188)

The analyses so far demonstrate that interactions during funeral inquest are not conducted at random but are governed by underlying cultural conventions which dictate how participants take turns to articulate their positions. The only variation between schematic structures 1 and 2 below is the number of stages in which the interactive discourse unfolds. This is usually subject to the age of the deceased; whereas the deceased in the first event is a young woman, the second event involves the death of a middle aged man. Thus the depth of gravity attached to the event of death is equally subject to the age of the deceased.

**Schema 2:** *schematic structure for Text B: the funeral inquest during the burial of Kwaghchimmin Ugilli (Vande-Guma 2014:123)*

- The *Íshùà* calls the gathering to order (CT1)\*
- The *ìtyò* offers greetings to the *ígbá* (CT2) \*
- The *ígbá* rejects the greetings with sarcastic remarks (CT3)\*
- The *ìtyò* state the problem (CT 4-8)\*
- The *ígbá* grants permission for interment by the *ìtyò* (CT9-12)\*

In the first event i.e. schema 1, the final stage of the events are somewhat inconclusive while the developments in schema 2 progress from the formal opening to the point when the *ígbá* grants the *ìtyò* permission to bury the deceased. Therefore the manner in which the funeral inquest occurs could vary. The study has identified recurrent features in both instances which underscore their status as obligatory elements, which comprise the basic framework called the generic structure potential (henceforth GSP), while the term for the combination of obligatory and optional elements that may occur is the actual generic structure. According to Martin (1997:16) the GSP represents the “macro-genre” which is a collection of “agnate genres” with similar schematic structures”. Put alternatively, the GSP includes all the activities that are deemed compulsory by cultural conventions while the actual generic structure includes both obligatory and accidental activities of the communicative event. Accordingly, the GSP for the event of *kú ù óròn* is, as follows:

**Schema 4:** *GSP for *kú ù óròn* (funeral inquest) (Vande-Guma 2014:128)*

- *Íshùà* calls gathering of both *ígbá* and *ìtyò* to order.
- Exchange of greetings
- The *ígbá* demands to know purpose of invitation by the *ìtyò*
- *Ìtyò* announces the death of the deceased.
- *Ígbá* demands to know about the cause of death.
- *Ígbá* rejects claims by *ìtyò* insist to know why they (*ígbá*) were not given prior information until death.
- *Ìtyò* tenders an apology
- *Ígbá* rejects the apology/demands for surviving descendants or siblings of the deceased.
- *Ìtyò* appeals to *ígbá* for understanding with gift offerings.
- *Ígbá* grants permission (or not) to *ìtyò* to inter the deceased.

### 1.2.2 Genre Patterns of the Tiv Traditional Bit-by-Bit Negotiation for a Bride Ceremony (*Kém ù Kwásè*)

There are several terms in the Tiv language for referring to the union between a man and a woman, which may constitute a problem for the non-Tiv person. These are given in Ushe (2007: 88-95) as *yámshè* (buying by the eye), *kém ù kwásè* (bit-by-bit negotiation for a wife), *ú yévèsè á kwásè* (to run away with a woman), *kwásè ú kòron* (woman that is caught), *kwásè ú tòn* (woman that is carried), *kwásè ú nyòron* (woman that is entered) and *kwásè ú eren shá mhángè* (woman that is married out of desperation).

*Yámshè* (buying by the eye) existed as the earliest form of marriage, which involved the exchange of a man's sister for the woman he wished to marry. This form of contracting marriage was abolished by the British colonialists in 1939 and is no longer practised amongst the Tiv people. *Kém ù kwásè* (bit-by-bit negotiation for a wife) replaced *yámshè* (buying by the eye) as the dominant system of marriage amongst the Tiv people. The word, *kém* which literally means little-by-little or bit-by-bit acquisition, in pre-colonial Tiv society referred to the overtures made by a man in form of various gifts offerings to the woman's parents and her extended family. After the abolition of the marriage by exchange, the meaning of *kém* expanded to include the actual negotiation and, ultimately, the gradual payment of the bride price by the suitor. The term is still applied in this sense in present day Tiv society. The other forms of union developed out of the resentment, by mostly the youths, of the difficulties, especially the financial, resulting from the rigorous process of *kém ù kwásè* (bit-by-bit negotiation for a wife).

In any case, with the exception of *yámshè* (buying by the eye) which is no longer practised and *kém ù kwásè* (bit-by-bit negotiation for a wife) all other modes of union are not deemed to be legal in Tiv tradition. Hence, it is only the union contracted through the process of *kém ù kwásè* (bit-by-bit negotiation for a wife) that qualifies to be called a marriage in the sense denoted by the English term i.e. marriage.

The bit-by-bit negotiation for a wife is accorded the highest recognition in Tiv culture because it involves the mutual bonding between two different families. The other forms of union can only gain legitimacy when the couples and their respective families undergo the rigorous procedures of *kém ù kwásè* (bit-by-bit negotiation for a wife). The major participants involved in the negotiations are the family of the woman or bride also called *mbáyāv*, which literally means, "those of the house" and the family of the groom, called *mbákēmèv* meaning "those for the bit-by-bit negotiation" i.e. the in-laws.

The pattern in which the negotiation takes place is represented, below, in schemata 4 and 5. The stages highlighted with the asterisk (\*) are obligatory elements because they are essential to the successful realisation of the goal of the discourse. The primary aim of these interactions is to negotiate for a bride price; the event provides the additional value of being the platform on which the families of the bride and groom interact and get acquainted with each other. In the course of discourse, the speakers express themselves with diplomacy and tact conscious of the importance of the familial ties to be created if the event is successfully completed.

**Schema 4:** Structure for Text E: traditional marriage of Martha (Vande-Guma 2014:126))

- Opening prayer (CT 1)\*
- Statement of purpose by guardian of the woman (Martha) (CT 2)\*
- Request for the woman's confirmation by elders in her family (CT 3 –5)\*
- Formal introduction of the groom and the bride to members of each family (CT 6–7)\*
- Request for purpose of visit by the elders of the bride's family (CT8-11)\*
- Demand for money by elders of the woman's family. (CT12-21)\*
- Intervention by representative of the woman's father (Felix Ikyam) (CT 22 – 26)\*:
- Specification of *agbo a gban sha kwase* (making of bullets for woman/gifts for elders in the extended family to secure the woman's welfare): *ikondo i orya* (cloth for head of family), *ikunju i orya* (the next to head of family), *ago* gifts for elders, *wondo* (pair of trousers), *shoir kwase hen nomso* (courtship gift for the men), *shior kwase hen u kasev* (courtship gift for the women), *kpandev ku u kasev* (tax
- Requests for drinks by the woman's family (CT 26 -27) \*
- Demand for additional money by elders of the woman's family (CT 28 – 30)
- *Ácín á tán* (A word of caution to groom's family) (CT 31 – 32)\*
- Requests for money for *koo* (cord to tie money) and mat (*hule butu* i.e. fold mat) (CT 32)\*  
*Yángè ásúá* chase the crows (interruption by noisy youths) (CT 33 – CT 38)\*
- Drink offerings appreciation and appreciation by *mbakemev* (suitor's family) CT 39 – 40)\*
- Groom is directed to the *ngokem* (mother- in-law) CT 41 – CT 44
- Interval: exchange of friendly banter between both families (CT 45 – CT 48)
- Offering of blessings by *wonov* (elders of the woman's family) CT 49 – CT 53)\*
- Head of family (Igbawua) announces the turn of the *ngokem* (mother-in-law) to give her consent (CT 54)
- Denial by the *ngokem* (mother-in-law) of any prior knowledge of the event (i.e. *kem* of her daughter)(CT55)
- Side comments (CT 56)
- *Or u usuur kwase* (spokes man for the groom: Engr. Peter Torjuun) seeks clarification from elders of the woman's family (CT 57)
- Elders instruct *or u suur kwase* to consult with the mother-in-law (*ngokem*) privately (C 58-61)
- Spokesman retreats with the *ngokem* (mother-in-law) (CT 62)
- Spokesman reports outcome of consultation with the *ngokem* (mother-in-law) (CT 63-CT 69)
- Spokes man hands over money to the *ngokem* (mother-in-law) (CT 70)
- Elders (*wonov*) direct that the bride be handed over to the groom's family (CT 71)\*
- Closing prayer

The first seven conventional turns (i.e. CTs 1-7) are vital preliminary stages for familiarisation of both families. CTs 2-5 are realised in declaratives as follows:

- 13            Yań                      ú            na    m ángbian wou u    kírikì ne  
 Long time ago    you    gave me sister    your of little    this  
                   á lu èr mó, náhàn á            và            káa mó ér  
                   she be with me so    she    come tell me that  
                   un zua    nóm            yọ, m nénge    mé  
                   she find husband then, I    see    that  
                   mó m ngù a            táháv            mbu mé témà tswén  
                   me I is with authority    for me sit alone  
                   mé òr    kwàgh u kwasé ga  
                   me talk thing of wife not  
                   ká náhàn vé  
                   it so    that  
                   m vē    a            vē    hén    vèn yé.  
                   I come with them here you then.

You gave me this your little sister, she was with me, so, she came and told me that she has found a husband, I saw that I have no authority to sit alone and talk about the matter of a wife[marriage], so I have brought them to you.

- 14            Ká    mō    òr    wán    je    m tíle            héen nè  
 It    me    man    child    that I stand    here so  
                   m    vér    ashé, me    nénge kwàgh u    í    vē    amín là,  
                   I    put    eye, I    see    thing that    be    brought with that  
                   álù    gbakà kpa, m fā gá  
                   if    viper but, I know not  
                   náhàn, álù    ká    iyóngù            kpa    mé    jìidi    mé    ya.  
                   so,    if    it    sheep            but I    cook I    eat.

It is me owner of the child, I am standing here, I place my eyes, I will see that thing which has been brought, if it is a viper but I do not know, if it is a sheep too, I will cook, I will eat.

- 15            M sùgh né    cií ngó    m kèmm ngù óron kwàgh    kpa m fá ga  
 I greet you all mother my in-law is saying something but I know not  
                   náhàn álù    mími kpà    m fá ga, àlu áìè kpa    m fá ga náhàn,  
                   so    if    true but I know not if lie but I know not so  
                   sárě m    pè    má u    tém iwángěr shá min, má m fě.  
                   desire I    that    should you throw light    on it,    may I know.

I greet you all, my mother-in-law is saying something, but I don't know, so, if it is true, but I don't know, if it is a lie, but I don't know, so, I desire to be enlightened [so] I may know.



- 16 M sùgh mbamarēn áv màn shi mbàmèárēn mbà shiòr yám  
 I greet parents my and also parents of fiancé my  
 kwàgh ú a ēr là  
 thing that she say that  
 á wa m áiè íyòl gá, m vá a nôm ù vá nan né.  
 she put me lie body not, I come with husband to come give you.
- I greet my parents and my fiancé's parents, the thing that has said is not a lie  
 I have brought a husband to give [show] you.

In 13, the bride's guardian explains the presence of the visitors to the elders, in 14 her that is the bride's elder brother metaphorically demands for more clarification while another relative of the bride re-echoes the same request in plain terms. In 16, the bride asserts her consent and confirms what her guardian has reported. With these CTs the ground is set for the next stage in which the head of the bride's immediate family commands the visitors to state the reason for their visit.

This is a very critical stage in the bride price negotiation process. In expressing the desire for the bride's hand and in order to make a good impression on the bride's family, the speaker is expected to be audible, confident yet tactful and not condescending. In the case of this event, the spokesman opted for an elaborate expression of interest as follows:

- 17 M sùgh ìtyò yâm Íchóngò hín Míndà kpíshí jē  
 I greet people my Íchóngò in Míndà alot well  
 mó màn Íchóngò i hén Míndà  
 me and Íchóngò of in Míndà  
 né se mbá kwàgh môm  
 this we are thing one  
 sé mba Íchóngò i shá Kwándè  
 we are Íchóngò of up Kwándè  
 shi sé mba Túrán kpàa  
 also we are Túrán too.
- I greet my people of Ichongo in Minda a lot  
 I and Ichongo in Minda we are one  
 we are Ichongo of Kwande, also we are Turan too.
- ....
- 18 Náhàn mvè wasè héén a dōo kpishì  
 So coming our here it good plenty  
 er ángòm u kírìkì ne á káa  
 as brother of little this he say  
 wener ú va hén kúa shi tèr na náhàn  
 that he came here with also father his so  
 tér wasè Tòrjun Gbema Káa Taakpe Daga ngù úmá ngù gbán gbán kpa

father our Tòrjun Gbema Káa Taakpe Daga is alive is well well but  
 er sé lú iòr mbà ken ùké yọ  
 as we be people are in modern then  
 á na sé ián ii áluer  
 he give us chance that if  
 gbāpē sé ónóv mba Tòrjun se se òr kwàgh  
 should we children of Tòrjun we we say thing  
 mo me luun her je  
 me I being there then  
 ká un je un lu her lá.  
 it him that he be there that.

So our coming here is very good, as my little brother here has said that he is  
 here with his father, our father Torjuun Gbema Káa Taakpe Daga is alive, he  
 is very healthy too; as we are people of modern times he has given us  
 permission to handle matters concerning the children of Torjuun. If I am  
 there, it is him that is there.

- 19 M sùgh né kpishì  
 I greet you plenty  
 m sùgh ngòmken  
 I greet mother in-law  
 m sùgh wonov av  
 I greet in-law my  
 m sùgh hàn mā ōr lu a vé heen cii.  
 I greet every person be he come here all.  
 Né a lūmūn yọ  
 You would agree then  
 kwàgh u se vé heen  
 thing that we come here  
 ká kwàgh u èrèn shá dóoshimà  
 it thing to doing with love  
 ká u èrèn sha iyóngù ga  
 it to doing with trouble not  
 man ícívir í né lú amin shá Kwande i ngée  
 and honour that you be with up Kwándè be plenty  
 sháaciu ángbían wām nē,  
 because brother my this  
 kwáse nē kọr ùn keń ishimá kigh-kigh.  
 woman this catch him in heart well-well.  
 Náhàn á vá nyér náhàn  
 So he come enter so  
 m fā mé  
 I know that

---

né kpáa né ná se kwásé.  
you too you give us woman.  
Áondo ún a lùmùn yọ,  
God He would agree then,  
A na sha er kwàgh u òrùn u sé lú órun héen  
He grant that as thing of talking that we be saying here  
á lu shá bem man dóoshíma shá er  
it be with peace and love that for  
nyían je, mé nyòr ā kwáse hén ya u tèr em yọ  
today then, I reach with wife at house of father my then  
une véne amar sha er ityò yàm Ichòngo yó,  
he dance dance as for people my Íchóngò well,  
kwásé ká nán èren nom yó  
woman it she marrying husband then  
ká í èr nan ivésé kéng kéng ivésé í ken churchi.  
it be doing her wedding must must wedding of in church.  
Náhàn né wa iyól shá er  
So you prepare selves so that  
yangé lá , né éren kwàgh ū kwasé vése vése  
day that you doing thing of wife quick quick  
ēr ter èm un á véne ámar nyian aíkíegh yọ  
so father my he would dance dance today evening well  
m sùgh né cii.  
I greet you all.

I greet you. I greet my mother-in-law. I greet my in-laws. I greet everybody with them all. If you agree, the thing that we have come here, it is something to be done with love. It is not to be done with trouble, and the respect you would have in Kwándè will be great, because, this little brother of mine, this woman has caught his heart very tightly. So as he has come so, I know that you too will give us this woman. If God wills, He should grant that the negotiations will be in peace and love so that in the evening of today, I will reach my father's house with this woman, then he will dance. As for my people of Íchóngò, when a woman is given to her husband, she is wedded in the church, so be prepare that day you will do the things required of you. [All I desire is] so that my father will dance this evening, I greet you all.

The excerpts in 17, 18 and 19 are some of the prolonged conversational turns (CT) characterising the discourse. In the first CT (i.e. 17), the speaker tries to convince the bride's family that a somewhat filial bond exists between both families by describing how their clans are related in the Tiv genealogy. In, the second (i.e. 18), he demonstrates that he has the approval of his father to speak for the family, and in the third (19), appeals for the understanding of the bride's family, prays for a peaceful negotiation, asserts his

younger brother's love for their daughter and indirectly seeks assurance that his younger brother's desire would be given a wife at the end of the event. The spokesman has demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of the Tiv tradition e.g. Tiv genealogy, order of authority in the family hierarchy and rhetorical conventions.

After the preliminary stage, the subsequent stages comprise the negotiations for the bride price proper. These negotiations are graduated beginning with the request for certain gifts- i.e. courtship gifts to be given to the members of the extended family, specifically called *ágbò a gbàn shá kwásé* (making of bullets for woman/gifts for elders in the extended family to secure the woman's welfare)- which occurs between CTs 22- 26. The children and youths of the bride's family also partake of the gifts sharing in CTs 33-38; this stage is metaphorically called *yángè ásúá* (chase the crows meaning to silence the noisy youths and children). *Ácín á tán* (caution throwing) represents another critical stage whence the head of the bride's family cautions the groom to be mindful of his daughter's welfare (CT 31 – 32).

The pronouncement of the bride price traditionally called *ihó ázèngà* and/or *kém* marks the climax of the event. This could be realised explicitly or inferred, for instance in the schema 4 the pronouncement is not captured because earlier during the preliminary stages the elder brother of the bride emphasised that it is a private matter between him and the groom albeit noting that the courtship gifts should be given immediate attention, as attested to by the excerpt below:

- 20      ...ágbò      a      gbàn      shá      kwásé  
              bullets      to      make      for      woman  
              ká      u      ká      u      tso      kwásè lá  
              it      for      it      to      secure      woman that  
              kwàgh lá      ngù even more dangerous than kém  
              thing that is even more dangerous than kém  
              ... ngù là      ngù á      kuá      iòr      kér      kpishì ...  
              ... one that is it include people inside plenty...  
              kpā kém      yó,      adòogà      ú      ná      m  
              but bride price well, maybe you give me  
              naílá útaan tségh kpā  
              naira five only but  
              m fatyó u      na      ú      kwásé  
              I can to give you woman  
              ú yēm a      mìn.  
              you go with her.

The courtship gifts for the extended family are necessary to secure the woman's welfare. It is even more dangerous than the actual bride price because it includes many people [outside the nuclear family of the bride.] As for the actual bride price, if you give me just five naira, and can allow you to

take your wife away [the payment of the bride price is strictly my concern as the bride's elder brother now that her father is deceased.

However, this stage (the pronouncement of the bride price) is given more prominence in the next event considered in schema 5. Furthermore, the concept of *ihó ázégà* and *kém* is clearly distinguished. The term *ázégà* refers to a bundle of sticks, which were tied together and handed over to the groom's family. The number of sticks in the bundle represented the bride price that was to be paid gradually, hence the term *kém*, which means bit-by-bit. Prior to the introduction of the use of money in the process of *kém*, the *ihó ázégà* symbolised the actual cost of the bride price. The concepts of both notions have evolved in the present day Tiv society. In some instances, *ihó ázégà* is interpreted as the payment that precedes the pronouncement of the bride price i.e. *kém* as in the event in schema 5- in CTs 52-73 and 74-84; in others both terms are used interchangeably.

**Schema 5:** *Schematic Structure for Text D: Traditional Marriage of Mbatomun*

- Exchange of greetings/opening prayer (CTs 1-4)\*
- Introduction by both families (CT 6)\*
- Acknowledgement of the presence of the traditional ruler (Zaki) by the spokesman for the bride's family (CTs 7-8)
- Demand for introductory gifts (*fá wonov* know your in-laws) by the bride's family (CTs 11-14)\*
- Demand for introductory gift for the head of the bride's family (*fá tǝrkém* know your father-in-law) (CT 15)\*
- Gifts for youths from the bride's family (*yángè ásúá* chase away the crows) (CTs 16-27)\*
- Demand for courtship gifts (*shìòr kwásè*, court the woman) (CTs 28-36)\*
- Demand for wet drinks (*msóorôm mándóor*) and dry drinks (*msóorôm má ómbūr*) (CTs 36, 55-73)\*
- Complaints by Zaki (CT 49)
- Demand for money for *kóo* (rope to tie money) and folding of the *bùtu* mat (CTs 50-51)\*
- Demand for the presentation of the *ihó-azenga* (money before the actual bride-price i.e. *kém*) (CTs 52-73)\*
- Demand for *kém u kwásè* (actual bride-price) (CTs 74-84)\*
- Presentation of the bride i.e. Mbatomun by her mother (CTs 86-87)\*
- Mbatomun's father (Orgban) seeks confirmation from his daughter i.e. Mbatomun (CTs 86-87)\*
- The father of the bride i.e. Mbatomun grants his approval and gives his blessings (CT 88)\*
- Mbatomun expresses her appreciation (CT 89)



Furthermore, the realisation of the preliminary stages in schema 5 is similar albeit variations in the labels assigned the respective stages. For example, the presentation of courtship gifts which is labelled ágbò a gbàn shá kwásé (making of bullets for woman/gifts for elders in the extended family to secure the woman's welfare) occurs as *fá wonov* (know your in-laws)- CTs 11-14 and *fá tǝrkèm*- CT 15 (know your father-in-law). In any case, both terms are treated as technical terms which reflect the presumptions that speakers bring to the gathering and reflect through their choice of expressions.

The verb *fá* which means know does not carry any connotations in everyday usage, however, in the context the negotiations for a bride price, the verb has an additional meaning that the spokesman for the groom's family is expected by tradition to understand. In the case of the event cited a non-verbal response in form of presentation of gifts such as specified amounts of money, drinks and other items is required of the family of the groom according to Tiv tradition.

Another variation in schema 5 is the point at which the bride is invited by her family to formally express her consent. In schema 4 this occurs during the preliminary stages- CTs 3-5 while in schema 5 it occurs towards the end of the interaction-CTs 86-87. These variations do not alter the basic genre patterns which define the order in which the bride price negotiations occur. The basic framework is given in schema 6 below:

**Schema 6:** *GSP for Kém ú Kwásé (bit by bit negotiation for a woman) (Vande-Guma 2014:128)*

- Exchange of greetings/opening prayer
- Introduction
- Statement of purpose of visit by suitor's family (Mbakemev)
- Confirmation from the woman (bride to be)
- Demand/presentation of introductory gifts:
  - fá wónòv* (know your in-laws)
  - fá tǝrém kǝm* (know your father-in-law)
  - shior kwase u nomso/kasev* (courtship gifts for men and women)
- Demand for/presentation of *kem* (the bride price)
- Presentation of the woman
- A note of warning/caution to the suitor's family (*ácì n á táān*)
- Handing over of the woman to the suitor

Discussions have so far analysed genre using the example of two traditional Tiv oral interactive events, *kém kwásé* (bride price negotiation) and *kú ú oron* (funeral inquest). Based on parameters outlined in SFL, it has been possible to demonstrate that there are consistencies typified by both events to prove that they are traditional genres. The analyses have most crucially confirmed the extent to which these genres depend on the continued

survival of the Tiv language and the need for the language to be developed. To express in blunt terms, most of these indigenous genres are conducted in the indigenous languages of the respective cultures which serve as their (i.e. the genres) natural habitat. The Tiv language, as well as several other Nigerian indigenous languages with native speakers numbering in millions, is in no danger of dying, but extreme dependence on the urbane Tiv bilingual on the village illiterate in matters residing with these subsisting genres also does not augur well for survival of the language and invariably culture. As the boundaries are continually melting, cultures are continuously being compromised to accommodate new trends which backed by economic forces eventually uproot the indigenous ways of thinking, feeling and acting over issues that are peculiar and not necessarily global.

Fairclough (2003:65) points out the analysis of genre, examines how a text as an instance of social interaction “contributes to social action and interaction in social events”. The manner in which the bride price is negotiated for instance reflects the Tiv and indeed a Nigerian universal notion of marriage as a union between families and communities. This is in complete opposite of the Western concept that restricts its understanding of marriage as a union between two consenting adults. Such indigenous concepts are at risk of disappearing because the people who should utilise them are growing more and more incapable of conducting the ceremonies where these understandings are most aptly expressed. There are avenues that could be explored to reverse this trend; these are addressed in the next section.

### **1.3 The Imperativeness of Linguistic Research in Indigenous Genres**

Studies in linguistics have intensified efforts to preserve endangered languages all over the world. Many Nigerian languages have survived because of the efforts by expatriates during the colonial era and their indigenous counterparts to study and document them (i.e. Nigerian languages). However, greater attention has been directed at providing descriptive records whether rooted in theories or not of the distinctive formal properties of Nigerian languages. The need for more expansive efforts to include areas bordering on language use still exists.

This article attests to the viability of the existence of several indigenous traditional genres in need of exposition. The genres reveal rich and vibrant rhetorical traditions that need to be documented before they become extinct. Once these genres get documented the database could be used to enrich the various curricula for teaching indigenous languages in schools. The Nigerian child deserves to be exposed to as many opportunities to hone his or her rhetorical and/or basic communication skills in his or her mother tongue as well as in the English language. S/he must not be left to feel alienated anywhere- whether rural or urban- in his or her native community.

It is important to preserve the linguistic diversity of the nation because it reflects the wealth of knowledge base that the world could benefit from Nigerian cultures. Amano et al (2014:15) has emphasised that encouraging a balanced bilingualism in which the individual functions confidently and smoothly in both languages e.g. the mother tongue and second language is “critical to preserving linguistic diversity”.

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Furthermore in a previous research Cambridge's Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics "has shown that children who speak more than one language have multiple advantages in education, cognition and social interaction" (<http://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/bilingualism-is-good-for-learning>). "The mental gymnastics needed to constantly manage two or more linguistic systems increases cognitive flexibility and makes learning easier" (ibid.) In respect to the central thesis of this article, it is injurious to deny the child access to adequate opportunities to acquire his or her mother tongue, most especially to learn and practice the indigenous genres within the settings of a formal curricula. With the ample opportunities provided, the breath of the child's knowledge base is expanded; s/he possesses various angles of examining and interpreting the world, is better positioned enrich the world with the synthesis of both worlds bequeathed to him or her via a balanced bilingualism.

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## **6. Towards the Preservation of the Gure Language**

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Language is dynamic. It changes with time. Some of the changes or modifications are natural while others are man-made. The history of language change can be traced to the Holy Bible. For example, the book of Genesis Chapter 11 tells us how at first the people of the whole world had only one language and were daring God by building a tower up to heaven. God then came down and confused their language (by introducing certain changes) in order to foil their mission. They started speaking different tongues (causing the 'death' of the first language). Many languages in Nigeria today are facing 'death'/extinction threat, because they are lacking the 'life' to go on. The Gure language in Saminaka area of Kaduna State has been chosen here as example of one endangered language among many others. It is the aim of this paper to apply the scientific theory of life to the study of languages (especially to the resuscitation of this minority or endangered language). The evolution theory, which extends to natural selection and most especially the characteristics of living things has been adopted for this work. Every living thing exhibits certain features to qualify as being 'alive'. For convenience sake, we shall use the eight popular characteristics of living things to see language as a living thing. A mnemonic of MR. NIGER D is used for the analysis; where M= movement, R= respiration, N= nutrition, I= irritability, G= growth, E= excretion, R= reproduction and D= death. Recommendations are also given on ways the endangered languages that fall within the Gure language example can be preserved and maintained.

### **1. Introduction**

Language as a human phenomenon has been variously defined and linked to human culture and way of life. Language as Sapir Edward (1927, 7) puts it "... is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols...", he said these symbols are first auditory and are produced by the organs of speech. We may not be exaggerating when we say language is life and is also alive when there are humans using it and passing it from generation to generation. The failure of a language to be passed from one generation another is likely to cause the death of that language. Many languages around the world today are facing 'death sentence' from various factors that we may try to see within this write up.

Language death in linguistics is a process that affects speech communities where the linguistic competence level of the speakers is decreased and leading eventually to a situation of no native or fluent speakers of the language; the 'language' here may denote a variety of a language. In linguistic studies, language death has variously been called - language extinction, linguistic extinction, linguisticicide and rarely also glottophagy. It is said that more than 50% of the world's languages are located in just eight countries: India,

Brazil, Mexico, Australia, Indonesia, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, and Cameroon. In these countries and around them are the areas that are the most linguistically diverse in the world according to Wikipedia. Most of these languages of the world are facing the danger of extinction or death. They are endangered.

The Gure language in Saminaka area of Lere Local Government of Kaduna State is one of these endangered languages, it is struggling to live, its vitality dwindling; may be because amidst the endangerment, the speakers are originally few. It is important to state here that the writer of this paper has adopted the introspection method of ethnographic analysis of communication; where a scholar or an investigator studies his or her own speech community, its values and characteristics. Ralph Fasold (1994:47).

It is the aim of this paper therefore, to use the Evolution Theory and Natural Selection from Charles Darwin and see language (especially Gure language) as a living thing that needs nurture and preservation to live and survive the endangerment.

## **1.2 Endangered Language**

An endangered language according to Wikipedia is a language that is at risk of falling out of use as its speakers die out or shift to speaking another language. Language loss occurs when the language has no more native speakers, and becomes a 'dead language'. If eventually no one speaks the language at all, it becomes an 'extinct language'.

It is also important to state here that while languages have always become extinct throughout human history, they are currently disappearing at an accelerated rate due to **Globalisation** and neo-colonialism- where the economically powerful languages dominate other languages. Hausa and English language have dominated the Gure language primarily and secondarily respectively, going by the shift the language is experiencing toward these languages.

The more commonly spoken languages dominate the less commonly spoken one and therefore, the less commonly spoken one eventually disappears. The total number of the languages in the world is not known, estimate vary depending on many factors. According to UNESCO, the general consensus is that there are between 6000 and 7000 languages currently spoken, and that between 50-90% of these will have become extinct by the year 2100. The top 20 languages spoken by more than 50 million speakers each are spoken by 50% of the world's population, where as many of the other languages are spoken by small communities, most of them with fewer than 10, 000 speakers. The UNESCO operates with five levels of language endangerment thus:

- Safe (having no danger in sight)
- Vulnerable (not spoken by children outside the home)
- Definitely endangered (children not speaking)
- Severely endangered (only spoken by the oldest generation)
- Critically endangered (spoken by few members of the oldest generation, often semi-speakers)

Krauss (2007), using an alternative classification, defines language as ‘safe’ if it is considered that children will probably be speaking it in 100 years, ‘endangered’ if children will probably not be speaking it in 100 years (approximately 60-80% of languages fall into this category); and ‘moribund’ if children are not speaking it now. The Gure language is at the UNESCO’s ‘Definitely endangered’ state and Krauss’ ‘Moribund’ with less and less children speaking the language fluently as native speakers now (Baba Mayaza, 2014). It is important here to say that assumptions have it that more than 200 languages have become extinct around the world over the last three generations. One factor that revitalizes a language is the presence of literature; which the Gure language has a negligible number, thanks to some Bible translation efforts recently and some written language gospel songs of the Linguistic Choirs. Aside from these, far few or no literature exist, meaning if nothing is done, the Gure language may not stand the taste of time. It is our focus here to proffer solutions to preserving it. The question here remains what we can do to preserve our death sentenced languages; the Gure language as an example.

## **2. The Gure People and Language**

The word "Gure" is a Fulani word meaning "Zango" or "Rugga" in Hausa language which means a human settlement. The Gure People call themselves "Agbiri", meaning "The men". Gure is an ethnic group made up of several clusters of settlements located in an isolated hillside fifteen kilometers west of Lere Town. The people are comparatively smooth-skinned, light in complexion and slim-built; characteristics, which tend to give credence to their claim of being of Fulani extraction (Atala 2005).

They were de-isolated and brought to the limelight by the coming of the Christian Missionaries who settled there in the early 1930s and built the oldest primary school in Lere and Kauru Local Government Areas of Kaduna State in 1942 and a Bible school in 1948. Consequently, Gure became an education centre where a large number of the educational elites in the Lere and Kauru area received their early religious and secular education. The Gure people believe that they are of Fulani extraction and originally from Baghdad, in the Middle East. The claim of having the same ancestor with the Fulani has popular support among the Gure people and their neighbors and also with the Fulani people themselves.

The early history of the Gure people traced their ancestry to the Fulani tribe and their origin in the Middle East. They moved to Niger Republic and settled at a place called Gure/Guri. It is not certain whether this place was called Gure prior to their arrival or it was named so at or during the arrival. From the Niger Republic, they moved southwards to Borno where they settled at Kukawa. They later moved to Sokoto and from there to Katsina. The Agbiri people later moved into the Bauchi Plateau and settled at Gumau in Bauchi State. Although the Gure people of Gumau in Bauchi do not understand the language of the Gure people of Lere Local Government Area, the Agbiri people believe that the Gurawa of Gumau were historically part of them. They later moved from Gumau to Lazuru about five kilometers east of Saminaka. Evidence of Agbiri habitation at Lazuru still exists. There is a well on top of the hills where they settled. The well still contains water to date. This well is referred to as Gure well by the present inhabitants of Lazuru.

Migrations of Agbiri/Gure people from place to place remain undated. The movements were however a result of the turbulent nature of those times. The cause of migration is attributed largely to the people's efforts to escape slave raids and also to the search for more fortified and hidden places to escape hostility of neighbors. The migration was also the need for greener pasture to graze their cattle.

The Gure people migrated from Lazuru, and their movement took them west of Lazuru to the eastern tips of Gure hills where they finally settled. The precise period when they moved out of Lazuru remains unknown but it must have been long before the Fulani Jihad. On their arrival at Kauru hills they settled by the following hills: Kasab, Kushin, Ugana, Kudara, Kawara, Pidama, Kagboyoy, Kapenti, Kushaja and Kagambu. The hills formed a ring which provided natural fortification against invaders. The Gure people built a stonewall linking these hills together to form the city wall. This wall that was known as "Kaghan" had gates for entrance and exit.

There were basically two major settlements. Those that settled on the north-western side of the hills are known as "Anazani" (hill people) and those that settled on the southern side are known as "Anagani" (lowland people). There are two factors that facilitated the movement of the Gure people from the hills to the plain land, which is the present site. One of the factors is the activity of the colonial administrators who imposed taxes on the Gure people. This brought hardship on the lives of the Gure people. The direct taxation introduced in Gure compelled the people to look for a plain land on which to cultivate their crops. According to Gunn, one of the Colonial Masters, Mr. Temple who visited Gure in 1929 stated that the Gure people had begun to move from the hills to the plain land and that by 1929 Gure farms were on the present site. Another factor attributed to the moving of the Gure people from the hills to the plain land was the coming of European Christian Missionaries and their activities.

The Sudan Interior Mission (S.I.M.) settled in Gure. The converts to the Christian Religion began to fail to perform the ritual of planting millet. And failure to observe traditional customs by the converts whom the Gure people called "nono-na-sara" (Children of the white man) coupled with the activity of the white missionary lady, Miss. H.C. Griffin, led to conflicts between the white lady, the converts and the Gure people. The continued disregard of the traditional customs by the converts made their relatives to expel them from their houses or family compounds. The expelled converts moved to the present site. In 1950 the white missionary worker, Miss H.C. Griffin left the old town and settled at Upah, the present settlement. In the same year many converts moved to join her in the present settlement, leaving the non-converts and other ethnic groups at the Kauru hills.

It did not take long when all the Gure people moved from the hills to the plain land, whether converts to the new religion or those who practiced traditional religion. This time, the settlements were not in groups of matrilineal clans. The villages were a mixture of different lineages, but the clans' traditions were still observed. The principal villages established in the plain land are "Aneghan" and "Anazani". These have multiplied into several villages as follows: Upah, Udammi, Sabon Kaura, Kakunga-Kugbi, Natere, Kadigi/Kitimi, Kabiza, Kakumu, Khalobi, Kabi, Nipanah, Garin Madaki, Abanna-Kakidare, Garin Padama, Jamaica, Ka'anguwa, Mayala, Adawoh, Kadigi, Anu-tsan, etc.

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The Gure language is called ‘Tugbiri’ and has an estimated 30, 000 native speakers; it belongs to the Niger-Congo Language family under:

- Atlantic-Congo
  - Benue-Congo
    - Kainji
      - East Kainji

The language codes of Gure is ISO 639-3 (grh); and Glottolog (gbir1241).

### **3. Discussion**

Natural Selection is the most famous theory of the Charles Darwin’s Evolution theory; it looks at the living things; their characteristics and the variants that give the individual living thing an extra survival probability. The theory of Natural Selection states that:

Evolutionary change comes through the production of variation in each generation and differential survival of individuals with different combinations of these variable characters. Individuals with characteristics which increase their probability of survival will have more opportunities to produce and their offspring will also benefit from the heritable advantageous character. So over time these variants will spread through the population.

This theory has presented clearly the changes or variation an individual organism would go through the generations for survival and this characterizes a living thing. It is not far from language itself. When the generational variations and probabilities of survival are slim or not available at all, death is inevitable. The Gure language example here is suffering from the paucity of the chances of survival from generational shift from the language to Hausa (primarily) and English language (secondarily).

Attabor, O. Theophilus (2013:161) says that one basic objective of every living thing is to give birth to its kind for the sake of the future generation (procreation). There is no doubt that language is a living organism since it is amenable to death, revival and expansion. He cited examples of families who died out completely because there were no offspring to continue the family lineage. Also languages have been reported to have died a natural death as a result of lack of native speakers in subsequent generations. Linguists have also warned that some languages of the world are likely to die, as we mentioned earlier. According to Janet Holmes (2008:58):

When all the people who speak a language die, the language dies with them. Sometimes this fact is crystal clear. Manx has now completely died out in the isle of Man- the last native speaker, Ned Maddrell died in 1974. Despite recent attempts to revive it, most people agree that Cornish effectively disappeared from Cornwall in the eighteenth century when Dolly Pentreath of Mousehole died in 1777. Less than half of the 250-300 aboriginal languages spoken in Australia when the Europeans arrived have survived. And fewer than two dozen are being actively



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passed on to younger generations... these are cases of language death.... These languages are not spoken anywhere.

From the above, we can go ahead and consider language as a living thing that exhibits the features of the Darwin's theory of Natural Selection and the characteristics of living things. It is important to note that when we say 'language' here, we are including the Gure language as one individual language (a living thing). In citing examples, the Gure language would be used, except where examples are not available due to paucity of literature.

### **3.1 Characteristics of a Living Thing and a Living Language**

In the studies of science like Linguistics and Biology, mnemonics are always helpful for presenting ideas. Here we shall give the seven basic characteristics of living things, the mnemonic of MR NIGER (D) where M= movement, R= respiration, N= nutrition, I= irritability, G= growth, E= excretion, R= reproduction and (D) = death (Stone, R. H et al. 1999:4).

*Movement* - refers to locomotion where a living thing moves from one place to another. To a language as a human phenomenon, the users of the Gure language move with the language as an embodiment of the culture from one place to another; their world view embedded in the language.

*Respiration* - the process of obtaining energy a living thing needs by breaking down complex materials into simpler ones, it takes place through the exchange of gases. To language, new innovations and system of using the language should evolve everyday example contributing at the global setting through the internet. More scientific literature and discoveries be written in the language to move with the globalisation trends.

*Nutrition* - the process of taking in nutrients/food for growth. To the language, consuming or borrowing from other languages the elements of language absent within the Gure language, every language borrows to grow; borrowing is an important morphological process. Gure has some few borrowed terms mostly from Hausa only.

*Irritability* - the ability of a living thing to perceive changes within its environment or surrounding. To a language, new developments around the speech community should be noticed and the language gulfs them, generational behavioural changes and coinages to cover them in literature and orature.

*Growth* - the process of replacement and repair. Increase in size and mass. To the language, the language grows as the population increases and modern culture and innovative technological trends be followed. All the morphological (words formation) processes in Linguistics of coinage, blending, clipping borrowing etc. must come to play in grammar and vocabulary.

*Excretion* - getting rid of waste within the organism. To language, every language dispels certain features within it that are old or out of use, this could be through meaning narrowing or extension, etc.

*Reproduction* - the ability to procreate and pass genitive information onto their offspring. To the Gure language, is the ability of the language to show vitality from generation to generation. This is a situation where all generations use the Gure language in variety of setting. Neologism may fit here as a morphological process.

*Death* - when malnourished, has the potential of dying out. Life ceases. When the language has no more native users it extinct.

Table 1. *Characteristics of Living Things and a Living Language*

| <i>Life Process</i>                       | <i>Explanation in Relation to Living Things</i>                           | <i>Explanation in Relation to the Gure Language</i>                                                                                                         | <i>General Remarks</i>                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Movement</i>                           | Locomotion from one point to another                                      | The language should move to other places through its speakers and also have influence on other languages. Richness of the language be displayed everywhere. | The language must be used within and without by the users. A cultural expression anywhere |
| <i>Respiration</i>                        | A chemical reaction that happens within cells to release energy from food | The language should open to accommodate more scientific and modern literature. More accommodating to external new ideas                                     | The language may be used as a vehicle for regenerating new ideas                          |
| <i>Nutrition</i>                          | Taking in nutrients for growth and development                            | May take or borrow fresh developments from many more languages other than Hausa to enrich its reach                                                         | The use of the language by the speakers opens and widens                                  |
| <i>Irritability</i><br><i>Sensitivity</i> | or Ability to detect changes in the surrounding environment               | Generational behavioural, environmental and cultural changes should be absorbed by the language. Be able to accommodate 'globalisational' changes           | The language should be flexible enough for global changes                                 |

|                     |                               |                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Growth</i>       | All living things grow        | The language should grow as the population grows if it is properly passed down                                            | The language should be able to cover every variety of settings speakers find themselves                                                               |
| <i>Excretion</i>    | Getting rid of internal waste | Morphological processes like meaning narrowing and extension are some ways of expelling out of use elements in a language | Cultural, behavioural and other changes should be perceived with the new trends they bring, but in changing for the new, the language must not suffer |
| <i>Reproduction</i> | The ability to procreate      | Vitality of the language waxes from generation to generation                                                              | More developments within the language. Adopting new ideas. The morphological processes are important here                                             |
| <i>Death</i>        | Life ceases                   | The language goes extinct; no native speakers                                                                             | When the present dangers to the language are not checked. Death to the Gure language is sure                                                          |

### 3.2 Language Revitalisation - The Gure Language Experiment

Language revitalisation also referred to as language revival or reversing language shift, is the attempt by interested parties to halt or reverse the decline of a language or to revive an extinct one (Tsunoda 2005).

Those involved can include parties such as linguists, cultural or community groups, or government. More often all the parties may come together for the mission. The major attempt in this mission is typically to expand the number of speakers and use of a language, or trying to maintain the current level of use to protect or preserve the language.

According to Wikipedia, some arguments exist as to the distinction between language revival (the resurrection of a ‘dead’ language with no existing native speakers) and language revitalisation (the rescue of a dying language). It has been pointed out that there has only been one successful instance of a complete language revival that of the Hebrew language, creating a new generation of native speakers without any pre-existing native speakers as model.

In revitalising the Gure language, we shall adopt here the model provided by the linguist Joshua Fishman. Fishman presented eight-stage process and said efforts should be concentrated on the earlier stages of restoration until they have been consolidated before proceeding to the next stage.

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- a. Acquisition of the language by children. And acquisition of the language by adults, who in effect act as language apprentices, especially where most of the remaining speakers of the language are elderly. It is important to remember here that a sharp distinction exists between language acquisition and language learning; while the latter is formal teaching the former is natural.
  - b. Create a socially integrated population of active speakers or users of the language. Here it is best to concentrate on the spoken rather than the written aspect of the language.
  - c. Encourage the informal use of the language among people of all age groups and within families and bolster its daily use through the establishment of local neighbourhood institutions in which the language is encouraged, protected and used exclusively.
  - d. After oral competence in the language has been achieved in all age groups, encourage literacy (reading and writing) in the language but in a way that does not depend upon assistance from the state education system.
  - e. If the state permits it, and if numbers warrant, encourage the use of the language in state education.
  - f. Where the above stages have been achieved and consolidated, encourage the use of the language in the workplace (lower worksphere).
  - g. Where the above stages have been achieved and consolidated, encourage the use of the language in mass media and local government services.
  - h. Where the above stages have been achieved and consolidated, encourage the use of the language in higher education and possibly in government etc.

The above postulations have been described by linguists as helpful in revitalising an endangered language. These may not be enough according to David Crystal (2000) in his book *Language Death*. He proposes six more factors that may help a language (the Gure language) to flourish. That progress is possible when the speakers:

- a. Increase the language's prestige within the dominant community
- b. Increase their wealth (economic empowerment)
- c. Increase their legitimate power in the eyes of the dominant community
- d. Have a strong presence in the education system
- e. Can write down the language (variously)
- f. Can use modern electronic technology

The endangered the Gure language and others can experiment with these suggestions and a revival may be inevitable.

Before concluding this paper, we may have to touch on language planning in the Gure language which may involve graphisation, standardisation and modernisation of the language as a way of further consolidating the solutions proffered so far.

### **3.3 Language Planning and the Gure Language**

According to Femi Akindele et'al (1999:73), language planning is a set of deliberate activities systematically designed to select from, organise and develop the language resources of a community in order to enhance the utilisation of such resources for development. Various activities may take place while planning language; these may involve 'status' planning which either widens or narrows the function of a language or dialect and the rights of those who use it, 'corpus' planning, which seeks to develop or improve the structure of a language or dialect; and 'acquisition' planning, which involves the decisions that are made about language learning in terms of structuring the learning environment, preparing teachers, creating materials and developing sound theoretical basis for learning the language.

Here, we shall focus on corpus planning of the Gure language. It involves the very important aspects of resuscitating an endangered language. Akindele (1999) quoting Adegbija (1994) said:

... such aspects include the preparation of orthographies, the commissioning of primers, and the publishing of newspapers in indigenous languages through processes such as compounding, derivation,... borrowing in a phonologically adapted form, expansion of meaning of existing words, use of words from dialects, lexical change and spontaneous formation of new words....

#### **3.3.1 The Gure Language Graphisation**

As a prerequisite for language revitalisation and development, the issue of graphisation necessarily becomes one of the major implications of keeping the language up to date.

The graphisation project is without any doubt a tedious one, from the alphabetization stage to that of resolution of inconsistencies and confusion of orthographic rules, even sometimes to the stage of orthographic reformation. The Gure language has for now adopted the Hausa language system of writing; the segmental and supra-segmental of Hausa are used except for some few sounds like /kpa/, /ae/ and /pya/ that may not be found in Hausa according to the Gure language Bible translation committee chairman, Dr. Kuduk Kuyene. D. He was elated that an effort has already been made and work is in progress, and room has been provided for further development of the process.

Some scholars have also given suggestions on how graphisation can successfully be done which the Gure language may adopt. For example, Akindele (1999) quoted Bamgbose (1965, 1969) as suggesting the following as features of a good orthography:

- a. It should represent all and significant sounds of the language.
- b. It should have only one symbol for each significant sound.
- c. "Tones in all tonal languages are as important as the consonants and vowels forming them."



It is of course also important to know that the alphabetic system of writing is used in orthographies of Nigerian languages and that the convention of writing is from left to right direction.

### 3.3.2 The Gure Language Standardisation

In standardising a language, the selection of features from a number of sub-varieties of the language is inevitable. Among the various dialects a standard dialect emerges, usually via a historical accident rather than via selection or legislation. Dr Kuduk Kuyene in an interview said that the ‘Aneghan’ variety of the Gure language mentioned earlier under the Gure people history is the chosen variety.

It is the variety that is being codified especially in the Bible translation project. There are other features of a standard language aside from codification. Its phonology, morphology, grammar and lexis must be generally acceptable to users, it must be intelligible. The Gure language is still working toward standardizing the language as more literature evolve.

### 3.3.3 The Gure Language Modernisation

According to Akindele (1999:136), the development and adaptation of languages for literary creativity, educational, social and technological development have a lot of implications for the modernisation of indigenous languages. It is important therefore to say that the above are absent in the Gure language. Mayaza (2014) said that aside from the Bible being translated into Gure, there has never been any significant write ups within the language. Although some efforts by undergraduate of Gure extract are yielding results where dissertations are submitted to universities on the language. Even this writer has submitted one to Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in 2008 titled *Phonological Interference on the English of Gure Native Speakers*. But these efforts can never be enough. More efforts must be put in creative writing, educational material, technological and scientific writing in the language.

In respect of creative writing, it is observed that not many authors write in the indigenous languages, either because they are not as creative in them as they are in English or Hausa, or because of the maximum exposure and financial gains that may accrue to authors and publishers from the sales of their works to the wider audience of English values and explore modern ideas.

It is a task for Gure as a community to make every possible effort in planning the language and modernizing it to meet up with the scientific, technological and the global trend. More work should be encouraged, research should be financed, and the internet must be explored using the language. It is more than just translating the Bible, though is a step in good direction.

**Conclusion**

We are able to analyse so far the level of endangerment the Gure language is facing and attempts have been made to see the language as a living thing that may deserve every nurture and care to live and regenerate from one generation to the other. Also its standardisation in context.

May be in closing, we may invoke the issue with the National Policy on Education which has not been what it was supposed to be. It states that government will see to it that the medium of instruction in the primary school is in initial the mother-tongue or the language of the immediate community and, at a later stage English. But how has this been even within the Gure language speech community? What is stated therein is contrary to what operates in reality, in which English or Hausa is used as the only medium of instruction in the Gure community. And the government finds it difficult to control the language of instruction at the pre- primary and the primary level, since most schools are privately owned.

Moreover, pre-primary education is an 'elite' institution attended by a negligible number of the children and it is the wish of the proprietors of these institutions and 'elite parents' of the children that English be used as the medium of instruction, due to the H prestige is has.

This is another matter whether to the interest of the children, the language, the parents, the teachers or not. This area, we want to recommend here that it be properly enforced and teachers in the language sought and trained to attend the aims and objects of the National Policy on Education.

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## **7. Towards the Preservation of the Tyap Language**

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The paper examines the gradual recession and the fate of the Tyap language of the Atyap in Southern Kaduna State of Nigeria in the face of the uncontrolled and threatening effects of globalisation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It identifies Tyap as an endangered language, and therefore proffers solutions on how to safeguard it and to prevent it from extinction. The place of the Tyap language within the Atyap cluster or dialect clusters is also discussed in passing. Some literary works were consulted and data were elicited in carrying out this research. The summation is that intergenerational transmission, the constant teaching and speaking of the Tyap language in our primary schools and beyond; the regular or periodic production of the Atyap literature and its electronic conservation are the minimum benchmark for its preservation in the face of the devastating effects of globalization.

### **Introduction**

It is no longer news that some languages of the world have gone extinct while many are endangered and are at the verge of disappearing from the comity of the over 6,000 languages of the world. The undying drive towards the preservation of the Tyap language of the Southern Kaduna people of Nigeria got its impetus from the latest prediction by Russ (2012) that most Nigerian languages including the Tyap language are under the serious threat of going extinct. He reported that “one language dies every 14 days and by the next century nearly half of the about 7000 languages will likely go extinct. That is, by implication many Nigerian minority languages may even be wiped out in the next five to six decades if conscious efforts are not put in place to forestall its occurrence.

The Atyap District may be described generally as undulating, prior to the establishment of Fulani-Ber-Beri regime in the early days of the nineteenth Century, the locality has fallen in varying degrees under the influence of the *Habe* rulers of Zaria or their representatives and allies such as the chiefs of Kauru, Kargi and Kajuru. The Kataf call themselves the Tyap (that being palatalized). The second syllable of Katab no doubt represents the word by which the tribe call themselves. This language has been provisionally included on grounds of vocabulary in the Nigerian Semi-Bantu group of the Middle Sudanic Zone. The Atyap (Katab) who numbered about 11,000 in 1931 as postulated by C.K Meek (1931:4), consists of four patrilineal groups or clans viz (1) Minyam (pop. 3,600), (2) Agbat (pop. 6,100), (3)Shokwa (pop.200), (4) Aku (pop.960). Each clan is exogamous, that is to say that intermarriage between members of the same clan is not permitted.



Today the Atyap people are found in other local government areas apart from Zango Kataf local government area. Some are found in Kachia LGA, Kaura LGA, Sanga LGA and Jema'a LGA all of Kaduna state of Nigeria. This explains why it is so difficult to have an authentic statistics of the total population of the Atyap people of the Southern Kaduna State. In discussing the Atyap cluster dialect, D. H Crozier and R.M Blench (1976:67) have estimated the Atyap people to 130,000 in 1990. The place of the Tyap language in the Kataf cluster like Gworok (Kagoro), Atakad, Sholio,(Morwa), Kacicere (Aticherak), and Kafanchan (Fantswam) is a very unique one, that is, it has ellipses and rapid pronunciation like the Hebrew language while in the other languages their pronunciation are being shortened. Tyap is the easiest language to learn in the Southern Kaduna State. If you are Atyap or you know how to speak it, you do not have to learn how to speak the other Atyap Cluster dialects.

This paper has therefore identified the Tyap language as one of the endangered languages of Nigeria that faces the threat of going extinct because of the effect of globalization, as represented through the use of the English language in all spheres of human endeavours, as well as the forceful effects of the domineering Hausa language on the native speakers of the Tyap language who now hardly speak their own language fluently without code-mixing or code-switching into Hausa or English language. It is an endangered species because it is not taught at any of the Nigerian Educational levels as prescribed by the Nigerian Policy on Educational and much of the Tyap speakers are from the generation of parents and above.

### **The Fate of the Tyap Language in a Globalised Age**

According to UNESCO (2012:22),

A language is endangered when its speaker cease to use it, use it in fewer and fewer domains, use fewer of its registers and speaking styles, and or stop passing it on the next generation. No single factor determines whether a language is endangered.

The following declaration by UNESCO on the causes of endangered languages shows that a language may disappear or become endangered when its speakers either disappear or switch over to speaking other languages as the case may be. For instance, if the Tyap speakers of the first and second generation stop the intergenerational transmission of the language, the potency and efficiency of the language will eventually become endangered and begin to go extinct or when the speakers shift from speaking it to speaking either Hausa or English or any other language same is to be expected.

At the moment, the state of the Tyap language may not be said to be critical. Hence, most children speak it even though it is restricted to certain domains like the home. The state of the language today is an unsafe one, or rendered in another sense, definitely endangered. This is so because the language is now used mostly by the parental generation and up. Children no longer learn the language at home as a mother tongue, though a majority still speak the language. However, it is still being threatened in a number of ways

through contact with the dominant majority language, that is, Hausa and the language of imperialism, the English language. The superiority and prestige being enjoyed by these languages rather make the Tyap language to be endangered in all ramifications. It has been established from non-empirical fact and the number of the Tyap language speakers, that the Tyap language is one amongst the endangered languages.

The recent state of language extinction worldwide informs the relevance of this paper in scrutinizing the fate of the Tyap language for a rapid response. Hence, it is observed that most of the languages that disappeared are indigenous languages that had no international prestige like the Tyap language. The Akuntsu tribe of the Northern Brazil is a victim of the foregoing fact. Today, nobody else speak the Akuntsu language; the resultant effect is that it will soon go into extinction forever. This was reported by the Global Movement for Tribal People's Report of February, 2008 on international Mother Language Day. Perhaps the main causes of language death as put by the UNESCO below is of great importance to ascertaining the fate of the Tyap language in a globalized world.

Languages are threatened by external forces such as military, economic, religious, cultural, or educational subjugation, or by internal forces such as a community negative attitude towards its own language. Today, increased migration and rapid urbanization often bring along the loss of traditional ways of life and a strong pressure to speak a dominant language; that is or is perceived to be necessary for full civic participation and economic advancement (UNESCO 2012).

One can deduce from the above submission that the Tyap language like any other Nigerian indigenous language is threatened by both external and internal factors as highlighted above. The Atyap community's attitude towards the speaking of the language today is dictated by the trend of globalization that has rendered the language to an inferior one. Much preference is given to such languages like English and Hausa even in our places of worship, schools and market squares, because of their political and economic prestige and power. The most dominant variable threatening the Tyap language today is the unrestrained instrument of globalization such as the internet, electronic and the print media whose businesses are being conducted in English language. The current effect of globalization through its agent the media, is succinctly captured in the words of Russ (2012), thus:

In an increasingly globalised connected homogenized age, language spoken in remote place are no longer protected by national borders or natural boundaries from the languages that dominate world communication and commerce. The reach of Mandarin and English extends seemingly to every hamlet, where they compete in a house to house battle. Parents in tribal villages often encourage their children to move away from the insular language of their forebears and toward languages that will permit greater education and success. Who can blame them? The arrival of television, with its glamorized global materialism, its luxury-consumption proselytizing, is even more irresistible. Prosperity, it seems, speaks English.

Globalization indeed has demolished national boundaries of the African countries as well as redefined cultural relations worlds wide. This redefinition and renegotiation is done through the languages that dominate world communication and commerce. This scenario has huge impact on the Tyap language and the Atyap people. This is so obvious because the Tyap language still enjoys the competence of its adult speakers and is still being transmitted to some children on intergenerational basis. Nevertheless, it is very important to emphasize that the language under study stands the risk of sliding into the category of moribund languages by the end of the twenty first century if nothing meaningful is done to protect it from going moribund or extinct.

### **The Steps to Preserving the Tyap Language**

Adekunle (2013 16) decries this current state of Nigerian languages thus. “Help, Nigerian languages are disappearing!” This cry shows why it really matters to work towards the preservation of the Tyap language, as well as other minority indigenous languages of Nigeria that are endangered and are gradually going into extinction by the day. For instance, Seibert in Adekunle (Ibdi 17) reported that Holma, a language spoken in north of *Soran* of Adamawa State, *Bête* and *Fali* of *Baïsse* - languages spoken in Takun LGA and *Falinga* plateau region of Taraba states are dying out. *Lere*, *Shau* and *Ziriya* languages spoken in Toro LGA of Bauchi state, and *Sheni*, a language spoken in Saminaka LGA of Kaduna state are near extinction. This worrisome linguistic situation makes the concerned speakers of the Tyap language to work towards the preservation of the language. The extinction of the Tyap language for instance, will result in the “irrecoverable loss of unique cultural, historical, spiritual and ecological knowledge that may be essential for the survival of not only its speakers, but also countless others” (FAQ, UNESCO). It therefore means that, the Atyap elite and the entire nation should not “play with the lyre” while our linguistic structures as well as our rich cultural heritage suffers a colossal loss.

Currently, there are a few literatures in circulation on the Tyap language and a literacy program is on-going within the Tyap speaking community of Zangon Kataf Local Government Area of Kaduna state under the auspices of the Nigeria Bible Translation Trust, Jos. The available Atyap literary texts include the following: *Tashinkum Din Tyap*. Nigeria Bible Translation Trust, Jos, Luka A. Dabo *An Introduction to Tyap for Beginners*. BI-SHANN Publishing Kaduna, Dimos Haruna, Joy and Carl Follingstad. *Zi Myiam Tyap Ji*. Jos: Nigeria Bible Translation Trust, Meek C.K. *Learn to Read and Write Tyap* (Myam Fang Mang Lyuut Tyap) Jos Nigeria Bible Translation Trust, Meek C.K. *Kataf and their neighbours*, Meek C.K. *Tribal Studies in Northern Nigeria* London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd.

The steps to conserving the Tyap languages are found within the ambit of the 2007 UNESCO documents on endangered languages in Sub-Saharan African, held at Addis Ababa that included the roles of the following: the family, the community and special schools, the language experts, and the role of public policy makers in language preservation. This document invariably has become the defining document for the steps to preserving the Tyap language. It is worthy of mention here that the community members’ attitude towards their language is a very fundamental factor to be considered in the

preservation of any language. These days, parents often use a second language to communicate with their children or wards. This is so because the mother tongue of the child is considered inferior to the second language or language of the immediate environment like Hausa or English.

Since the Tyap language has its orthography developed alongside other language materials such as grammar, folk tales and proverbs books, it then means that efforts already have been made towards the preservation of the language. Right now, Professor Zamani B. Kafang, a distinguished scholar of the Old Testament (OT) Biblical languages and other researchers are currently working on the Tyap dictionary. So far, they have got not less than four thousand words. However, it is fair to say that the advent of globalization has also helped in the preservation of the Tyap language. The development of the Tyap orthography and its electronic documentation or preservation was made possible through the instrumentality of globalization.

### The Tyap Alphabet (Zhunyhwuo Alyem Atyap)

|     |     |     |    |    |     |     |    |    |    |    |
|-----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|
| Aa  | Aw  | Ab  | Bw | Gh | Chy | Dd  | Ee | Ff | Gg | Gb |
| Gh  | Ghw | Ghy | Gw | Ii | Jj  | Jhy | Kk | Kh | Kp | Kw |
| Li  | Mm  | Nn  | Ng | Nw | Ny  | Oo  | Pp | Rr | Ss | Sh |
| Shy | Sw  | Tt  | Ts | Tw | Uu  | Vv  | Vw | Ww | Yy | Zz |

Unlike the English alphabet that has 26 letters, the Tyap alphabet has 46 letters. They are exemplified, as follows:

|          |                                                                |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>A</u> | <u>A</u> fang (a stone), <u>a</u> ma (back)                    |
| Aw       | <b>A</b> wop (cough), <u>a</u> wam (dry season)                |
| B        | <b>b</b> ung (cap), <b>b</b> ai (come)                         |
| Bw       | <b>b</b> wung (mud), <b>b</b> wak (hand)                       |
| Ch       | <b>ch</b> am (watch), <b>ch</b> ung (run)                      |
| Chy      | <b>ch</b> yam (sieve), <b>ch</b> yat (seek)                    |
| D        | <b>Ad</b> ak (canopy), <u>a</u> da (cutlass)                   |
| E        | Dyep (praise), Alyem (tongue)                                  |
| F        | <b>f</b> ung (rest) <u>a</u> fung (to read)                    |
| Fw       | <b>fw</b> ui (burn), <b>fw</b> uo (neck)                       |
| G        | <b>ag</b> wam (a king), <u>a</u> gwa (whistle)                 |
| Gb       | <b>gb</b> ang (hold), <u>a</u> gban (barn)                     |
| Gh       | <b>agh</b> aat (main raod), <b>gh</b> ak (boundary)            |
| Ghw      | <b>ghw</b> ak (draw), <b>ghw</b> ap (bend something)           |
| Ghy      | <b>aghy</b> ang (another), <b>ghy</b> ek (belch)               |
| Gw       | <b>gw</b> aza (God), <b>agw</b> am (a king)                    |
| I        | <b>li</b> (house), <b>bi</b> (brave)                           |
| J        | <b>J</b> ip (throw away), <b>J</b> injok (beans)               |
| Jhy      | <b>ajhy</b> em (a state completeness), <b>jhy</b> ip (madness) |
| K        | <b>k</b> pang (check), <b>k</b> ak (clear)                     |

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|     |                                                               |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Kh  | <b>kham</b> (calabash), <b>khan</b> (grey hair)               |
| Kp  | <b>kpa</b> (pistle), <b>kpai</b> (plucking)                   |
| Kw  | <b>nkwon</b> (firewood), <b>kwai</b> (clan)                   |
| L   | <b>alan</b> (a pot), <b>insufficient</b>                      |
| M   | <b>map</b> (bite), <b>mang</b> (and)                          |
| N   | <b>nam</b> (meat), <b>nok</b> (build)                         |
| Ng  | <b>dudung</b> (mota), <b>lung</b> (dig)                       |
| Nw  | <b>nwap</b> (tribe), <b>nwuak</b> (give)                      |
| Ny  | <b>nyang</b> (scorpion), <b>nyuak</b> (women)                 |
| O   | <b>adong</b> (pot), <b>nok</b> (build)                        |
| P   | <b>apimpi</b> (chaff), <b>jip</b> (throw away)                |
| R   | <b>lurung</b> (back a childstrap), <b>tur ung</b> (to remove) |
| S   | <b>sam</b> (to hear), <b>sang-gbap</b> (the end)              |
| Sh  | <b>asham</b> (beautiful), <b>shim</b> (cool)                  |
| Shy | <b>shyiip</b> (to wake), <b>shyak</b> (change)                |
| Sw  | <b>swanta</b> (the world), <b>swakpat</b> (maize)             |
| T   | <b>tau</b> (pay), <b>tak</b> (leg)                            |
| Ts  | <b>tsang</b> (stealing), <b>tsatsak</b> (good)                |
| Tw  | <b>twai</b> (sewing), <b>twong</b> (honey)                    |
| U   | <b>kup</b> (close), <b>lung</b> (dig)                         |
| V   | <b>kuvak</b> (tortoise), <b>vam</b> (body)                    |
| Vw  | <b>vwong</b> (send away), <b>vwai</b> (tie)                   |
| W   | <b>wak</b> (swim), <b>wan</b> (to leave)                      |
| Y   | <b>yok</b> (to stop), <b>yak</b> (grain)                      |
| Z   | <b>zwuk</b> (milet), <b>zanang</b> (tithe)                    |
| Zw  | <b>zwok</b> (quarrel), <b>zwak</b> (snake)                    |

On the phonological aspect of the Tyap language, /n/, Aa/, /A/, and /ah/ are very pronounced in the Tyap consonant and vowel sounds. The Tyap language has 12 vowel sounds and 74 consonant sounds as contained in Dimos, H, Carl, F and Joy F (n.y. 72-3)

### Conclusion

This paper is a wake-up call to all and sundry, and most especially the Atyap people, in the drive to reverse the current trend where a language disappears every two weeks as speculated by Russ (2012). The onus of intergenerational transmission of the Tyap language as one of the major panacea lies in our hands, if we must preserve it from going into extinction. The eventual extinction of the Tyap language will by implication mean the fading away of the entire cosmology, world view, identity, cultural heritage as well as the richness of the complimentary diversity of the socio-political cum intellectual contributions of the Atyap nation to the development of the Nigeria body; polity and the world at large. This paper opens the gate way for further researches in the Tyap language which could serve as a document paper that could be developed and recommended to the government



for studies and action plan towards the preservation of the Tyap language and other minority languages in Nigeria.

**Recommendations**

Due to the unprecedented rate of the current waves of the encroachment of globalisation, thus putting the Tyap language at a great risk of extinction, the paper comes up with the following recommendations:

- a. The Agwatyap, his traditional council members and the Atyap nation should as a matter of necessity revitalize the Atyap Traditional Festival (cultural celebration). It shouldn't be replaced with prayers for the Tyap land. Both can be married together with lectures on the historical background of the Atyap nation through oral transmission.
- b. The Atyap community should, therefore, revive her long forgotten folklore and folktales in order to promote the intergenerational transmission of their rich cultural heritage and so help save the language from disappearing.
- c. Parents should understand that their children's ability to speak the Tyap language would not blur their understanding and learning ability, but instead it will serve as the linguistic spring board for the learning of other languages like English, Bajju, Aegworok Hausa, French et cetera.
- d. The Federal Government should use the available tools and technology as well as to form an alliance for linguistic diversity that will help to propel, fortify and catalyze efforts around endangered language documentation, to protect, support and raise awareness about ways to address threats to endangered languages.
- e. The Atyap literacy committee could also play an active role in putting the Tyap language online by submitting information or samples in the form of text, audio or video files. In addition, Tyap speakers will be able to share best practices and case studies through a knowledge sharing section and more production of Tyap journals, stories and a complete Tyap dictionary.

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## **8. Play Songs and Peer Group Activities as Resources for Revitalising the Tiv Language**

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Many languages, including Tiv will likely die in the nearest future if concrete measures are not taken to avert this unfortunate trend. One of the ways to avert this is to explore the oral tradition where much about the Tiv language and culture are expressed and preserved in songs and peer-group interactional activities such as *kedeke*, *shishinshiin*, tongue twisters, and folklore. These traditional elements come under focus in this paper. Play songs constitute an important language and cultural resource in language development and preservation. Songs provide an enjoyable way in enabling children to play and share their experiences. Songs have elements of both communication and learning and through them children acquire the basic skills, such as oral fluency, numeracy, and perhaps literacy. The paper also highlights the benefits of using peer-group interactional activities to not only enhance mother tongue communication, but also as a way of preserving the Tiv language and other cultural values that are severely threatened and are likely to go into extinction.

**Key words:** *Play songs, endangered languages, peer-group, interactional activities, mother tongue, globalization*

### **Introduction**

Language is both a mark of identity and a means of communication. Ngugi (2008) as cited in Omachonu and Adama (2012:1) asserts that “language is at best at the heart of the development process of whatever kind in any community or nation. It serves as the key link between all the realms that make up a community; wealth, power, value system, self-definition and evaluation of a community.”

Swande and Ishima (2012) describe language as an invaluable means of communication, which is alive, active and dynamic, and which grows and survives overtime. In the same vein, Shoja (2013:15) describes language as “an indispensable tool that man needs in his day-to-day living in this ever changing world where activities such as formal education, administration, trade, religion, science, technology are on the increase.” To Adejir (2010:2), “languages are living entities which need to be nurtured by not only the community of their speakers, but also by other languages within the greater community...They also die when for one reason or the other, the community of speakers goes into extinction, as it happens often these days.”

Some languages of the world have died and many others are on the verge of dying. Before a language dies, it shows features of endangerment. That is, it moves on “a path

towards extinction” (UNESCO, 2003:1). UNESCO (2003:1) also maintains that “a language is in danger when its speakers cease to use it, use it in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains, and cease to pass it on from one generation to the next. That is, there are no new speakers, adults, or children.” At the moment, Tiv shows evidence of endangerment. More and more Tiv parents today prefer to hold family discussions with their children in English. The Tiv language is sparingly used both at home and in the work place. Cultural activities such as storytelling and riddles are fast giving way for home movies and western sports monitored via television and satellite. Consequently, Tiv children prefer to use English as the language of play and dialogue.

The foundation of language is based on oracy skills, namely speaking and listening. The child’s immediate environment enhances the acquisition of these skills. These skills can be learnt and mastered through songs, chants, storytelling, dramatization, proverbs, riddles, tongue twisters and so on. In addition, children engage in interaction and game activities such as running, wrestling, swimming, football, throwing, etc., which require the active use of language and language forms and gestures. The language of communication is therefore, at the centre of all the activities listed above. Farrant (1979) as cited in Ugbabe (1987:57) has noted that:

African children from a very early age participate in the activities of the community, and that their mental concepts and linguistic ability are acquired in their natural setting rather than in the artificially created environment of the nursery. Storytelling, poems, proverbs and riddles have been a part of African oral tradition for several centuries... and these still exist in the oral form and is conventionally narrated by children in the village, or passed on from parent to child by word of mouth.

Unfortunately, this aspect of human life has been neglected in African societies, including among the Tiv people in Nigeria. The Tiv people are found in large numbers in Benue, Taraba, Nasarawa, Plateau, and Cross River States and in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. More than anything else, the neglect of this once cherished aspect of the people’s way of life accounts for the endangered state of the Tiv language.

Songs play an important role in both the development and preservation of a people’s language and this has been widely reported in the literature (Barker, 1999, Schiller, 2008, Millington, 2011). According to Barker, singing and making music are among the most enjoyable learning activities for children. Singing contains elements such as enjoyment and learning, which are themselves properties that reinforce basic skills in numeracy and literary. When children sing, they repeat words and phrases regularly. Repeating words and phrases on the one hand brings about pleasure and on the other hand enhances recall. Barker (1999) argues that repetition is important for learning, and songs can provide a good learning model which is easy to follow as the flow of the words is often enhanced in the flow of music.

Children who are exposed to songs and chants and other oral activities such as storytelling become perfect in sound discrimination and pronunciation. Schiller (2008)

and Murphey (1992) particularly support this claim when they contend that songs help children to develop listening and thinking skills. Millington (2011) further argues that songs help children to build vocabulary skills. In language studies, a good vocabulary is an important aid to quality speech and reading. It can be stressed that the environment in which the child learns language especially the mother tongue needs to be full of oral activities such as songs, storytelling, riddles, jokes, and proverbs. Language and culture go hand in hand and as children listen to their parents and other adults use songs, folktales, tongue twisters, riddles, jokes and proverbs, these children unconsciously learn language on the one hand, and the culture of the language on the other hand. The child's first point of acquiring experience is the home where he is surrounded by his parents and siblings. The experiences provided by these set of people is very important for the rest of his life. These experiences help him/her to develop physically, mentally, emotionally and socially language and play are at the centre of these experiences. It is through language that the cultural norms and values of a people are transmitted from one generation to the next. Language is also the basic criterion for determining the ethnic identity of a people. Given the importance of language as shown above, it becomes imperative for every group of people to guard their language against any force that will cause it to die.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Lev Vygotsky's theory of social development is a springboard for this work. The major theme of this framework is that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Vygotsky (1978:57) states: "every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological..." Vygotsky (1978:56) provides the example of finger pointing. Initially, the behaviour begins as a meaningless grasping motion. However, as people react to the gesture, it becomes a movement that has meaning. In particular, the pointing gesture represents an interpersonal connection between and among individuals. The implication is that full cognitive development requires social interaction and it is this social development that influences the child's overall growth. Family members' influence, caregivers' influence, and peer group influence all play a major role. In this context, play songs and peer-group interactional activities enhance the process of keeping languages alive.

### **Globalization and Language Endangerment**

According to the *Cambridge handbook of endangered languages* (2011), there are about 7,000 languages spoken across the world and at least half of these may no longer continue to exist after a few more generations. The major reason for this is that in most communities of the world, these languages are not being learnt by children as first language. For example, most Nigerian languages, including Tiv are endangered in the face of globalization, which has and will continue to have a pervasive overriding influence on the languages of the world. But what is globalization? One may ask. A good definition of the term has been provided by Mazrui (2004) that globalization refers to "the process by which regions of the world become linked, at various levels of society, through an expanding



network of exchange of peoples, goods, services, traditions, etc. across vast distances” (see Agbedo & Eze, 2012:11). The effect of globalization on the world’s minority languages can be linked to the ‘green gas’ effect (Agbedo & Eze, 2012). Ianna (2012:139) expands on the effect of globalization especially as it pertains to language that globalization “... seeks to subjugate the economies and even languages of the third world countries.” He (Ianna 2012:139) further notes that “English is heading towards becoming the ‘language of the global village’...sooner or later, most people will abandon their languages for the language of the global village.” The influence of globalization on the languages of the world, especially African languages can be traced to the era of colonization. The colonialists’ interest did not lie with the retention and development of their colonies’ languages but with the subjugation of such languages and cultures. In line with this Shoja (2012:20) maintains that:

Nigeria’s earliest language policy was the straight for English policy of the colonial masters. As the term implies, the policy ensured that as soon as the Nigerian child comes to school, he should go straight into learning the language of the colonial master...it was almost felt that any education worth calling education, must be given through the language of the colonial masters.

As a result, indigenous languages and cultures had to be relegated to the background and replaced with western ideologies. Perhaps that is why Maduka (2010) describes Nigeria as a product of a long process of globalization. This negative attitude explains why most Nigerian languages daily head towards extinction. Globalization among other factors accounts for why English language is flourishing at the detriment of other languages.

### **Language endangerment**

According to the Endangered Language Fund as cited by Clark (2002), “languages have died off throughout history, but never have we faced the massive extinction that is threatening the world right now... As language professionals, we are faced with the stark reality: much of what we study will not be available to future generations...” Language endangerment has been defined by Crystal (2008:168) as “a language which is at risk of becoming extinct within the foreseeable future...” Scholars (Austin & Sallabank, 2011; UNESCO, 2003) have already advanced one major reason why languages die – such languages are no longer learnt as mother tongues especially by the young ones. Krauss (1992) as cited by Austin and Sallabank (2011) had predicted that 90 percent of the world’s languages would be severely endangered or gone by 2100. We are worried and continue to feel that this kind of prediction might turn out to be true as speakers of indigenous languages are becoming smaller and smaller, and as more languages and ethnic groups are no longer practising aspects of their cultures that make language survival possible. Among the Tiv, experience has shown that the Tiv language is seldom used in the Tiv home. More worrisome is the fact that where it is used at all it is sparingly used in greetings, family conversations, prayer, worship, and pleasure activities such as storytelling and singing.

### Tiv Play Songs and Peer-Group Interactional Activities

Songs, chants and peer-group activities could play fundamental roles in revitalising the Tiv language. Songs are part of the Tiv social, economic, political, religious and cultural life. The Tiv tribe has an infinitely large number of songs some to mark moments of merriment, grief, worship, and pleasure. Among the Tiv, one finds songs used during play, relaxation and work. Apart from their aesthetic and entertainment values, Tiv songs are important in a number of ways: Tiv songs contain the history and origin of the Tiv people. They describe aspects of Tiv culture, occupation, values, norms, myths, and belief system. Tiv songs contain elements of praise to commend hard work, elements of love to express love for the loved one, elements of criticism to lampoon behavior or traits that are loathed, elements of empathy and sympathy for compassion, etc. There are also songs for war and crisis situation, and songs for the different Tiv festivities that make the Tiv, a unique set of people. Jenkwe (1982) classifies Tiv songs into philosophical poetry, heroic, religio-medicinal, elegiac, love, derisive, and didactic. Early Europeans such as Keil (1979) who came into contact with the Tiv as well as Tiv scholars such as Prof. Iyorwuese Hagher, Dr. Emma Jenkwe, Dr. Ayem Shoja and many others have written extensively on the importance of songs as an oral form to the Tiv language and culture.

One of the distinguishing features of Tiv social and cultural life is the presence of family social activities, peer group interactional activities and social outdoor activities (Udu & Udu, 2013). In all, songs feature prominently as a key element. Family social activities among the Tiv according to Udu and Udu (2013) include *ukikya* (traditional riddles), *kwaghalôm* (folktales) and *kwagh-hir* (magic) puppetry. *Ukikya* (plural form of *kikya*) belong to the sub-genre of Tiv orature played in a question and answer session to test one's power of reasoning. A *kikya* session involves at least two players. Often, one person asks a question that looks like a puzzle while the others answer it. Usually, he begins by calling members to order with the word: *Kikya!* (Meaning, I have a riddle!). The expected answer is: *Kilo!* (Meaning, I am/ we are prepared to answer it). The advantages of *ukikya* are as follows: They enable children to acquire very important language skills such as turn taking, pronunciation, listening and cognitive skills such as reasoning, recall, juxtaposition, etc. Another benefit of *ukikya* is that they pave the way for children to acquire the knowledge about their environment and interpretation of natural phenomena (Shoja & Ukeli, 1996). Among the Tiv, *ukikya* precede *kwaghalôm* (folktales) sessions. Holding *ukikya* session is a form of opening glee, or an introduction to a main event, which is *kwaghalôm*. Almost all Tiv tales have one or more songs to go with it. Keil (1979) maintains that Tiv tales seem a likely source of illumination since most stories contain a song and in most instances the song is clearly central to the action. We have already noted that songs not only aid recall, but there are also a good resource for developing and preserving language and important aspects of culture. Tiv folktales if used regularly in Tiv homes would facilitate preservation of the Tiv language, norms, values and beliefs that the Tiv people hold in high esteem. Folktale sessions have other benefits too. They increase the unity and togetherness of families. They help parents and adults to instill morals in children very easily. They combine entertainment with information, and children are

afforded the opportunity to understand and interpret events around them better. This kind of knowledge is essential and could provide a very good foundation for formal schooling.

Another aspect of Tiv life that can be explored for the preservation of the Tiv language is the use of peer-group interactional activities. Examples include *kedeke* and *tavayia* games. These are purely children games, which can be held in the presence of parents, especially the mother who is mostly around the house with children. The games are held in the moonlight after the day's activities. The presence of parents during these games could be an advantage to the children in a number of ways. They (parents) could monitor the way the games are played, correct poor pronunciation, and control awkward behaviour. Udu and Udu (2013) have noted that though different, *kedeke* and *shishinshiin* have an identical playing pattern. There is also no restriction as to the number of players that participate in the games. In both games, the participants sit with both palms closed and held between the lap. Then the lead player moves from one person to the other with a small object (say a stone) with the intent to give it to one of the participants. The act of giving the object is a secret maintained only by the lead player. He could thrust the object in the palms of each of the participants as many times as possible and finally leave same in the palms of one of the participants. A neutral participant must guess correctly and pick on the person whom he thinks collected the small object. The *kedeke* and *tavayia* songs are sung by all the participants during each round of the game. A typical example of *kedeke* song goes as follows:

**(i) Tav Ayia Song**

**Tiv: Tav ayia**

*Tav ayia ver sha kpekpe*

*Ikyume i tav ayia*

*Alele ankwadam*

*Too ayia er me kpe*

*Kedeke u malikye*

*U yiye o*

*Kyôho o*

*Ansha gbuluma*

*Môm*

*Haa*

*Tar*

*Nyiin*

*Taan*

*Teratar*

*Taankaruhar*

*Adi yaka oo*

*Ma mye pue*

*Ngôm a kaan ansha gbuluma*

**English: Gather the Reeds**

Gather the reeds and place on the wall

Python gathered the reeds

Alele ankwadam

Took the reeds as if I would die

Kedeke of malikye

U yiye o

kyoho o

Ansha gbuluma

one

two

three

four

five

six

seven

Adi yaka oo

Let me win ten

My mother saying ansha gbuluma

**(ii) Takuruku**Riddle: *Takuruku ta aji atar*Response: *Ka atse a ruam*Riddle: *Samber abeda nyor Kwande*Response: *Ka atumba ikyondo*Riddle: *Takuruku cir ikyondo iyol*Response: *Ka igbende kurugh***Translated: Takuruku**

Riddle: Takuruku lay three eggs

Response: A tripod of stones

Riddle: Spread the wrapper to reach Kwande

Response: It is a loom

Riddle: Takuruku covered himself with a cloth

Response: It is a tortoise's shell

A critical look at Song 'I' above song reveals very important language and mathematical features. The song contains important numerical information (one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, ten). As the children sing, they also count. This leaves in them the ability to count and associate number with counting. Note also that repeated singing of the songs enables memorization and fast recall. The children gradually perfect in both receptive (e.g. listening, identification) and expressive (speaking, counting) skills. This kind of foundation is very essential for the learning of the second language. In Song 'II,' children can learn new words, and engage in a lot of thinking and reasoning as stages for giving solutions to problems.

**(iii) Shinshiin Chant**Tiv: *Shishinshiin*

English: Shishinshiin

Lead: *Shishinshiin*

Shishinshiin

Response: *Ta ajiiiii*

Lay eggs

Lead: *Shishin ku legh legh*

Shishin ku legh legh

Response: *Ta ajiiiii*

Lay eggs

Lead: *Agodogodogoo*

Agodogodogoo

Response: *Ta ajiiiii*

Lay eggs

Lead: *Akpookpoo kpoo kpoo*

Akpoo kpoo kpoo kpoo

Response: *Ta ajiiiii*

Lay eggs

In the preceding example, the alliterative elements coupled with the rhythmic nature of these songs and chant could give children a lot of pleasure and entertainment. Where songs in the mother tongue are encouraged among children, learning in the second could take place in a much faster manner because the child had already become perfect in pronunciation and acquired other experiences critical to second language learning situation.

Such a child will see the relationship between elements in his mother tongue and those in the second language. This will make positive transfer easy.

Tiv songs serve as a means of communication. People could use songs to call others out of danger or to communicate novel information in a manner that is not too direct as in conventional speech.

Apart from the above examples, there are songs and chants that serve general play purposes and make children enjoy being together and sharing their experiences. Examples are as follows:

**(iv) Kpekpetyo**

*Lead: Kpekpetyo tule ior angahar*

*Response: Tule tule.*

*Lead: Ankpekpetyo tule ior angahar*

*Response: Tule tule.*

*Lead: Wua ngô na kpa ya zwa na*

*Response: Hoooooooooooo yio ooo kpekpetyo tule ior angahar tule tule*

**Translation:**

*Lead: Kpekpetyo pull people's legs*

*Response: Pull pull*

*Lead: Ankpekpetyo pull people's legs*

*Response: Pull pull*

*Lead: Kill the mother and eat alone*

*Response: Hoooooooooooo yio ooo kpekpetyo pull people's legs, pull pull*

**(v) Anyoolomoo**

*Lead: Anyoolomoo!*

*Response: Voo voo*

*Lead: Mba lahan se oo*

*Response: Voo voo*

*Lead: Se mba voo voo*

*Response: voo voo*

*Lead: Se kuma ga oo*

*Response: Voo voo*

**Translation:**

*Lead: Little birds*

*Response: insignificantly little, insignificantly little*

*Lead: We are being despised*

*Response: insignificantly little, insignificantly little*

*Lead: We are little in outlook*

*Response: insignificantly little, insignificantly little*

*Lead: We are little in outlook*

*Response: Response: insignificantly little, insignificantly little*



The above song depicts children as members who are looked down upon by adults in society. The song reminds children of adult perception of their kind. The song is /could be used to encourage children to live and do things together for there is strength in togetherness. The song is /could be used extensively when children are engaged in a piece of work.

Furthermore, the spoken the Tiv language could be given a facelift if supported with the so many tongue twisters among the Tiv. Tongue twisters are generally poetic and musical and involve the repetition of consonant sounds in a group of phrases or sentences. Let us consider the following example:

(vi) Tor Tiv  
*Tor Tiv tema tor.*  
*Tar Tiv taver Tor Tiv taveraa.*  
*Tor Tiv tom tor taver*

**Translation:**

Tor Tiv became ruler/king  
over the Tiv  
Leadership became so difficult  
Leadership is not easy

**Recommendations**

Having examined in depth the value of Tiv songs and peer-group interactional activities in giving hope to the survival of the Tiv language, we hereby recommend that:

- a. Parents should revive the culture of storytelling in which children are given the opportunity to listen to their parents tell stories before going to bed every day. In this way, children will master the language of the parents and as well acquire very useful experiences about the complex society that we live in. This will in turn help them in problem solving and keep them in touch with aspects of their cultures that are facing extinction.
- b. Parents should engage their children practically in the use of the mother tongue through the use of riddles, tongue twisters, songs, chants and proverbs. This will give children a good foundation in speech and increases the likelihood of language preservation and transmission.
- c. The government of Nigeria should encourage literature that is written and published in indigenous languages through the staking of prizes to be competed for, or through the sponsorship of publications that are written in indigenous languages.
- d. Parents living in cities should encourage their children to visit their villages to interact with children in the villages in order to learn aspects of the cultures that are

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not emphasized in the townships. Alternatively, where children cannot visit their villages, they should be shown home videos that depict aspects of our cultural lives that are fast being replaced by western ideals.

- e. The Tiv language should be used most of the time as the language of communication during social gatherings like burials, traditional marriages, yam festivals, naming ceremonies and the like. This will help to keep the language alive.
- f. Local Government Councils should initiate language revival or revitalization programmes for all endangered languages. Among the Tiv people, it could organize *kwagh-hir* puppetry theatre, song and dance competitions to revive aspects of the Tiv language and culture that are dying.
- g. More teachers should be trained in indigenous languages to effectively man the teaching of indigenous languages in schools.

### **Conclusion**

Children who interact and make use of play songs, folktales, riddles and proverbs in their mother tongues stand a better chance to gain more when they meet similar elements in the second language. In fact, these resources give them the opportunity to socialize in a traditional setting, and make them conversant with the cultures, beliefs, and norms of their fatherland, and these afford them opportunities to be well adjusted socially and linguistically. On the whole, using songs and peer group interactional activities help in preserving our mother language for future generations. This article has shown that songs and peer-group interactional activities have elements of both communication and cognition, and through them children acquire the basic foundations skills such as oral fluency, numeracy and literacy, which are important enhancements in a second language situation.

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## **9. Measures to Safeguard the Etulo Language**

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The paper acknowledges the existence of minor and major languages in Nigeria in general and Benue State in particular, and describes the Etulo language as one of the minor languages requiring urgent attention to safeguard it. The method for data collection was random sampling. Some of the obstacles to the development of the Etulo language which were identified include the non-conformity of the current Etulo orthography to the general principles of a good orthography; little or no research on the minor languages of Benue State, including the Etulo language; non-inclusion of linguists in the alphabetisation/graphisation of the Etulo language; non-assignment of roles and functions by language planners (including government) to the minority languages. The recommendations of the paper include, among other things, the need to involve linguists in the alphabetisation and planning of the orthography of the Etulo language; a call on linguists to embark on aggressive language documentation and description of the minority languages of Benue State; and the need to also assign functions/roles to the minority languages of Benue State.

### **1. Major and Minor Languages in Nigeria**

Agbedo (2011:36-37) has classified the languages in Nigeria into major and minor depending on their number of speakers. To him politically and numerically speaking the major ethno-linguistic groups are the Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba and the Igbo, while the rest constitute different degrees of “minority” status. Among the minorities, he still sub-categorised them into “large minorities” and other minorities. The large minorities are those that have millions of speakers and they are Ijaw, Kanuri, Fulani, Edo, Nupe, Tiv, Igala, Urhobo, Itsekiri, Ibibio, Efik, Idoma and so on. The rest of the languages are just labelled as minority languages.

#### **1.1 Major and Minor languages in Benue State**

In Benue State, the major languages are Tiv, Idoma and Iggede in that order. Apart from these three, we have other languages such as the Ezza, the Izzi, the Uffia and Effium who are found in Idomaland but speak their languages (Fuller nd: 15). The Ezzangbo speak the Ngbo or Mgbo language but they live within the Idoma territory.

The other minor languages of Benue State are those spoken within the Tiv territory. The speakers of these minority languages are chiefly bilingual in the sense that they speak both Tiv and their languages. They are the Etulo, the Iyon, the Ugbe, the Undir; the Utanga who speak Itang. Some others are the Utsembe, the Utser and the Usaa who are part of Ikkyurav-ya District of Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State. Apart from Utanga and Undir, the rest of the languages mentioned are in Benue State. While the Undir are partly in Cameroon, the Utanga occupy Obanliku Local Government Area of Cross River State. An interaction with the speakers of these languages shows that they speak both Tiv and their languages even with their children.



Politically, they are classified among the Tiv ethnic groups. But they have their languages which they tag as “languages of secrecy or privacy”.

## 2. A Brief History of the Etulo Language

The language a people/nation speaks cannot be separated from the people themselves. This is an ethnolinguistic reality that must not be overemphasised. So, in tracing a brief history of the Etulo people, one is, in essence, tracing the history of the Etulo language. Note should be taken that the bulk of the history is taken from Sam Tabe’s book *A Brief History of Etulo: An Introduction to a Divine Kingship (1596 – 2006 AD)*.

According to Tabe (2007:4), the word Etulo means (i) the people (ii) the language the people speak (iii) the land they habitate (sic) along both banks of River Katsina-Ala. Etulo language is one of the minority languages spoken in Benue State by no other person than Etulo people themselves. It adds to the number of the minority languages that are found in the middle belt region of Nigeria.

Tabé (2007) again states that the Etulo are one of the Jukunoid groups of people that formed the erstwhile Kwararafa kingdom in the Benue valley in the distant past. He further states that they came from the far East into the Benue valley or Kwararafa. The Etulo were not the only ones from this group. Other groups like the Jukun, the Idoma, the Geomai, Afo, Alago and even Egbira were all from one kingdom under one king known as *Ongyunfa* in their language. It was while they were together that they borrowed some words from Idoma and others like Alago. They also had some contact with Udam people from Cross River State. Their movement to this place took many years and had many stopovers. Sometimes, it was as if they would not move again but due to some hardships they had to move. These hardships were not peculiar to Etulo people alone. All the other components that made up the Kwararafa kingdom were part of the migration. Later, it was not even possible for them to be together again due to some factors that arose. The factors that led to their going to different directions were:

- i. Outbreak of small pox and chicken pox which occurred frequently.
- ii. Dynastic squabbles – The Royal families were always fighting over who should rule next
- iii. Famine due to lack of farming activities and also the invasion of unknown men who attacked and killed some of them.

The Etulo, Idoma, Geomai and Ogoja migrated southwards when they split from the Kwararafa kingdom. This split was the second since they left Kwararafa somewhere near Jalingo in Taraba State probably during the reign of *Aku Agbu Kenjo* about 1579 – 1596AD.

From the reign of *Aku Matswe* from 1803 to 1816 up to the reign of *Agbunshu Mallam Audu* in 1903 – 1915, there were serious links between the two peoples (Etulo and Jukun). The Etulo left the *Andandara* and *Aamgbe* mountains due to attacks by the Chamba Ogenyi in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century.

From there they went to *Onyaawiri*, a place near Adikpo in Kwande local government area of Benue State where they lived peaceably with their neighbours. As a result of this, one Etulo man and his family refused to move with the larger Etulo family on the pretext that his wife was expecting a child. But the real fact was that he

saw so much to enjoy in that place and deliberately refused to join his kith and kins. The other Etulo were annoyed and called him *Mnana*. *Mnana* became a father of many children and settled in Kwande Local Government Area.

Apart from *Mnana*, the rest of Etulo later decided to go back to the Kwararafa kingdom and meet their brothers whom they had parted ways with. The journey back to the Kwararafa kingdom was, however, not successful as they were surrounded by the advancing Tiv who cut them from the Idoma, the Jukun and the Alago people with conquest. They then started learning some Tiv words.

In the twentieth century particularly in the 1920s, the Etulo came in contact with the Europeans who encouraged the production of cash crops such as soyabeans and beniseed. At present, the Etulo occupy both banks of River Katsina-Ala, about 136 kilometres east of Makurdi, the Benue State capital. The Etulo land stretches from latitudes 7°N and 9°N and lies within 1°E to 13°E (sic) longitude (Tabe, 2007:1).

Fuller (n.d: 177) a CAPRO research officer (CAPRO – Calvary Productions) has posited that politically, Etulo are said to be one of Tiv clans but speak their own language and have their own chief called Otse Etulo. Linguistically, CAPRO survey says that almost every Etulo speaks Tiv. And about 60% speak Hausa. Also, about 35% are illiterate. The remaining 5% are unaccounted for in that survey.

Contributing to the linguistic aspect of it, Tabe (2007:5) says that the Etulo language has many words of similar pronunciations and meanings with the languages of Alago, Idoma, Jukun and other Jukunoid peoples mentioned before. So, as the people were moving from one place to another and associating with and disassociating from other people, their language was doing the same. It has been confirmed by one of their own (Tabe), that the phonology and semantics of those Jukunoid languages are similar to those of Etulo. So, at present the Etulo language is spoken chiefly in Buruku and Katsina-Ala Local Government Areas of Benue State in North Central Nigeria.

### 3. Alphabetisation of the Etulo Language

Alphabetisation is the process of choosing letters of the alphabet in a fixed order to represent the sounds of a particular language. Different languages that are written have their different number of letters that make up their alphabet. For example the English alphabet has twenty six (26) letters beginning from A to Z. The Tiv alphabet has twenty-four (24) letters also from A to Z, excluding “X” and “Q”. The Etulo alphabet has thirty-three (33) letters which also begin from A to Z but since it is the language in focus, special interest has been taken in it and so this paper will take a critical look at it. The 33 letters of Etulo alphabet are:

|      |    |      |      |      |
|------|----|------|------|------|
| Aa   | Bb | Cc   | Dd   | Dzdz |
| Ee   | εε | Ff   | Gg   | GBgb |
| Hh   | Ii | Jj   | Kk   | Kpkp |
| Ll   | Mm | Nn   | NGng | NYny |
| Oo   | Ɔɔ | Pp   | Rr   | Ss   |
| Shsh | Tt | TSts | Uu   | Vv   |
| Ww   | Yy | Zz   |      |      |

Closely following the letters of Etulo alphabet is the manner of articulation of the alphabet. That is, how each of the letters of the alphabet should be pronounced. This system of pronunciation/articulation is as prescribed by the team known as Etulo Bible Translation Project led by Pastor Peter Angulu and not the researcher's prescription. The 33 letters are to be pronounced this way:

|     |     |     |     |      |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Aa  | Bε  | Ce  | Duu | DZii |
| Ee  | εε  | Fε  | Jε  | Kε   |
| Kp  | Lu  | Ma  | No  | Nga  |
| Nyε | Oo  | Ɔo  | Pi  | Ri   |
| Sa  | She | Ta  | Tsε | Uu   |
| Vi  | Wa  | Yεε | Zuu |      |

The above letters of the Etulo alphabet and their corresponding pronunciation jointly make up the *Etulo Orthography* such that by the time this is properly adopted, all words in Etulo will be spelt using those letters of the alphabet. So far, there is a translation of the Holy Bible into Etulo that is going on and if one takes a look at the sample, one will agree that the translators have actually adopted that orthography.

The Etulo system of writing follows the pattern of Oberi kaime (Oberi Okaime) script which was revealed to one seminant by the "Holy Spirit" in 1928 in Ikpa village near Iyere in Itu Division of Calabar province and handed to a religious sect who also adopted the language, Oberi kaime as their own. According to Adams (1911), as quoted in Agbede (2003),

The Oberi Ɔkaime script contains about thirty-two main symbols with diacritic marks, strange forms and special letters. All the thirty two symbols have both small and capital forms. The symbols in some cases represent two sounds, such as ks sk (s) and pt (Agbede 2003:79).

The difference between the Oberi Okaime script and the Etulo alphabet is that the Oberi Okaime alphabet contains some diacritic marks to distinguish the pronunciation of some sounds just like the Yoruba distinguish the /ɔ/ sound by putting two dots under letter o / ɔ / and the /ʃ/ sound by putting a diacritic under letter s. The Etulo on the other hand decide to combine two letters to represent one sound like "sh" which represent the /ʃ/ sound. It looks as if there is no distinction between letters of the alphabet and phonemic symbols. This has to be checked by linguists using the yardstick of the principles of good orthography which are as follows.

#### 4. Principles of a Good Orthography: Implications for Etulo

There are laid down principles to guide whoever is saddled with the responsibility of drafting an orthography for any language. Among others, the principles lifted from Kay Williamson (1984) are: (a) accuracy (b) convenience (c) consistency (d) harmonisation (e) familiarity.

There several areas where the principles of a good orthography as recommended by Williamson (1984) were not followed in devising an orthography for the Etulo language. In what follows, we shall present the principles of a good orthography and then use that as the basis for assessing the present Etulo orthography.

#### 4.1 Accuracy

An orthography should and must agree with the sound system of the language for which it is intended. Where the orthography deviates from the sound system of the intended language, it loses its phonological fervour and if this happens, the writing system of the language will be completely different from the oral production of words from the language. The orthography must also have a distinct way of writing all the different sounds of that language. That is, no sound should replicate the other. If this is taken into consideration, ambiguity can be avoided and therefore accuracy will be achieved and there will be no redundancy (Williamson 1984:8).

Some sounds in the Etulo alphabet are unnecessarily duplicated, such as **Ee** and **εε**. Also **Dz** and **Zz** are tokens of the same sound. This is against the principle of accuracy and even consistency.

#### 4.2 Consistency

The same sound or word should always be written the same way whenever and wherever it appears. Any letter or combination should stand for the same sound irrespective of the tone. This is in the case of tonal languages like Tiv, Idoma, Etulo and many other African languages. This means that writers or inventors of orthography should be well versed in segmental features of its phonology. The knowledge and ability to identify the phonemes of that language will be very helpful here. After all, Africans spell phonetically.

The issue of a sound written the same way wherever it appears is also violated in the present Etulo orthography. For example, *bεyi* and *Ikye*. They should both be represented by the proper letter “e” and not the other “ε” as in *bεyi*. The tone should not determine the spelling. Rather the sound or phonemic representation should.

#### 4.3 Convenience

The orthography should be convenient to use. A situation whereby there are too many symbols which are difficult to write or type or print, it is too cumbersome and people will not bother to write it correctly (Williamson 1984:9). Even the children whose mother tongue (MT) or L2 is that language will not be keen in learning it not to talk of writing it. But if an orthography follows the simple pattern of the Arabic alphabet that are used and recognised everywhere in the whole world, it will be very convenient.

Some letters of the Etulo alphabet which make up the orthography are not convenient to write or type. The most inconvenient is “ε” followed by the “?”.

#### 4.4 Harmonisation

A good orthography must be similar to other orthographies. Wolff (1954), as quoted in Williamson (1984), posits that:

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It is... important that each orthography should be as similar to the other orthographies as possible.... If the orthographies of different languages are vastly different, the task of readjusting to the new orthography may prove very discouraging... It is important, therefore, that the orthographies of Nigerian languages should diverge as little as possible. If a letter is used in one language to represent a certain sound, every effort should be made to avoid using that same letter to represent a completely different sound in another language (Williamson1984:10).

This principle of harmonisation thus encourages Nigerians to read one another's languages by writing them as far as possible in the same way. A good example of harmonisation in Nigerian languages is found in the Tiv and Hausa orthographies. A Tiv speaker who is literate in Tiv can read Hausa language even if he does not understand Hausa. For those who understand it (Hausa) it is very easy for them. If all other languages' orthographies are related like Tiv and Hausa, literacy in Nigerian languages will be easier to achieve.

The peculiarity of the Etulo orthography far surpasses one's imagination. The issue of combining two letters to make one is so appalling. The combined letters are gb, kp, dz, ng, ny, sh, ts as single letters of the alphabet. It is like what a preacher called "*God's Equation*" on a wedding day. That, in the mathematics of God,  $1 + 1 = 1$ . That is explained that a husband and a wife have become one flesh. So in essence we can say there is a marriage of letters to form Etulo alphabet. The uniqueness of the Etulo orthography makes it very difficult for speakers of other Nigerian languages to read in Etulo. So the orthography lacks harmonisation.

#### **4.5 Familiarity**

Certain things have a generally acceptable way of doing them and a situation whereby one tries to change so many things just to achieve one's sense of pride or boost one's ego that "this is how we do our own thing" may not augur well with other people. It may kill the zeal or interest of some important personalities that would have aided the project. So the researcher agrees with Williamson that "if something new is introduced let us be convinced that it is better than what is already known. But if we try to change too many things, people will just refuse to accept it and it will remain controversial (Williamson1984:11). An orthography is supposed to be embraced by the sons and daughters of the region where it is selected. It should unite the people and not scatter them. It should receive popular support specifically from bilinguals of that region where it is introduced. This will popularise the language and attract more support for its growth.

To a large extent, the Etulo alphabet has followed the laid down principle and sequence. It starts from Aa and terminates at Zz just as the English and many other alphabet. The only difference is the peculiarities aforementioned.

There is however, no cause for alarm concerning the Etulo orthography and alphabet. The fact is that, they are just starting. Up till now the pupils have not started learning it in school in a formal class situation. The teaching is being done to groups like churches and some cultural groups. Also, the Etulo Dictionary is being worked on.



## 5. Language Endangerment

The concept of language endangerment has attracted so many definitions from different linguists. While some scholars base the nature of endangerment to the number of speakers, others pin it to the issue of the ethno-linguistic attitude of the speakers of that language. What then is language endangerment? An endangered language, according to Agbedo, (2011:72) is a language that is threatened by extinction either because it has few speakers or because it has not been passed to a younger generation. Many languages in the world are endangered either because of language shift or lack of writing in such languages. This may result to language loss, attrition or outright death.

### 5.1 Factors that lead to Language Endangerment

The different factors that lead to language endangerment are:

- i) Assimilation into more powerful linguistic groups – like English and pidgins
- ii) Death of oral tradition
- iii) Code-switching which leads to language shift.
- iv) Lack of ethno-linguistic egoism or language loyalty
- v) Lack of scientific and technological cultural changes (Agbedo, 2011:74-75).  
Also
- vi) Lack of dictionaries and other literatures in the language

### 5.2 Preventing Language Endangerment

Looking at the various factors that lead to language endangerment, the writer has penned down some measures that should be taken to prevent the endangerment and eventual extinction of the Etulo language. These are:

- a) *Language Attitudes*: Attitudes shape the life of an individual and so, language attitude also determines the future of a language. Shagba (2014:28) avers that “if speakers of a language cultivate a centripetal and positive attitude towards it, it can help the language to grow”. This will also prevent language shift which is an indicator or pointer to language endangerment.
- b) *Standardisation*: Denham, J. and Lobeck, A. (2010: 448) posit that writing a language down does have the effect of beginning the standardisation process. This involves factors such as publication of dictionaries, suggesting standardised spellings and rules of writing, also the teaching of the language to speakers of other languages.
- c) *The Media*: The use of a language in the print and electronic media helps a language to be strengthened and grow.
- d) *Diffusionism*: According to Wikipedia, (2014) diffusionism has to do with ideas, styles, religions, technologies and languages when they remain strong in their area as well as spread to other areas. This theory which was propounded by Elliot Smith and Perry as stated in Idyorough (2002:24) is very relevant here because it encourages cultural and linguistic borrowing. The process of borrowing in turn

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helps a language to be in tune with latest technologies and also enriches the vocabulary of its speakers. This eventually lifts the standard and status of a language.

## **6. Observations**

In the course of this research, the writer has observed among other things the following issues.

- i) That there are more minor languages in Benue State that have not been heard of. And because they are not even known to be there, little or no research is carried out on these languages.
- ii) That the graphisation and alphabetisation of the Etulo language has so far grossly flouted the general principles of orthography laid down by linguists.
- iii) The non-inclusion of language in the 2006 census has made it difficult for researchers to ascertain the number of speakers of any language in Nigeria.
- iv) A look at the gazette or catalogue of language planning in Nigeria shows that assignment of functions and roles has been limited to only the three major languages in Nigeria which are Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo (Agbede, 2011:72).
- v) That if something drastic is not done, the Etulo language, which is an endangered language, will soon go into extinction.

## **7. Recommendations**

From the above observations, the researcher has made the following recommendations:

- a. That the team working on the alphabetisation of Etulo language should seek the services of linguists who will guide them to do a correct job that will comply with the general principles of orthography.
- b. Language planners should assign functions to minor languages like Etulo too.
- c. Linguists should rise up and research into the many minor languages that are in Benue State and begging for recognition.
- d. The Etulo language should be codified and standardised so that it can eventually become the national language of Nigeria.
- e. Finally, this work is recommended for scholars to use it for further research.

## **8. Conclusion**

The Etulo language is regarded in this write-up as a new language because, according to linguists, any language that has not been written yet is a new language. It will also, not be wrong to call it a “baby language” because it is still grappling with the teething problems of alphabetisation. Also, the quandary of language endangerment is a threat to the Etulo language. The suggested solutions to the prevention of extinction of this language should not be overemphasised. If this language is standardised, it can surely compete favourably with the so-called major languages and be assigned official roles as well.

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## **10. The Fate of the English Language in Nigeria in the Cyber Age**

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Diverse conversations on two media namely: ‘SMS Messaging’ and ‘Facebook’ were randomly sampled and transcribed. The data were analysed to ascertain the dynamic ways that conversationalists use the English language on the two media. The findings revealed that most conversationalists wrote by using the ‘new innovative orthography’ which is a total deviation from the Standard English (SE) orthography and were evident in abbreviated form, coinage, deviant spellings, number homophones, phonemic spelling and deletion of letters. The paper concludes that the innovative orthography is gaining ground by the day and might soon overshadow the standard form of the English orthography. The paper urges teachers of English as second language (ESL) to draw a curriculum that would integrate the new innovative orthography by juxtaposing the SBE orthography with the new innovative orthography to ensure that the standard form is maintained and preserved for formal usage.

### **0. Introduction**

According to Scott et al., (1979:1) “language is on its own. It is different from anything else we take part in. And it is something that we take part in, not merely a subject to learn about”. This is a proof that everyone uses language to play one role or the other in such a way that would suit the person’s purpose. Another thing about language is that it is not static, it moves from one generation to another. For example, there was a massive change in the orthographic system of the English Language from Old English (OE); Middle English (ME); Early Modern English (eME) and present Day English (pDE) where words like: ‘slahan’ was changed to ‘slean’ and to ‘slain’ and to ‘slaughter’ all these changes were within some generations (Brooks, 1958; Banjo, 1996; Berber 2002). These changes were accepted generally by the speakers within the generation. The crux of the matter is the way English language orthography is being abused everyday on the cyber is alarming as this could affect the formal use if it is not salvage.

Crystal (2013:13) confirms that “... in blogs, social networking sites, web page forums and personal websites, there is little or no external editorial influence, we see writing there in its most naked form, in passages of continuous prose...” This is evident that the standard form of writing is being affected on the cyber by its users. Though Crystal advises that we can revise our posts so that they conform exactly to what we believe to be Standard English. This is a clarion call for ESL teachers (1) to create the awareness that there is the need to revise every posts sent on the internet (2) to ensure that learners of English language are aware of the ‘new innovative’ writing on the internet is informal and cannot be used in a formal situation. The ESL teachers should juxtapose the teaching of the formal and informal writing, for example the use of contracted form like: betw/betwn should be juxtaposed with the formal one ‘between’.



Nigeria was founded by the British in 1914 A.D and has since adopted English as the official language. English Language has a great influence over other languages in the world. It is the world hard currency of communication if one wants to be heard. Nigeria has about 521 languages with dialects, but only three languages have been adopted as official languages because of the populations of the speakers and regional reasons (Rotimi, 2012:3). In spite of this English Language takes pre-eminence (Faleke and Shehu, 2011:51).

The linguistic roles that English plays cannot be over emphasised. Adegbite (2010:20) identifies two roles micro-uses and macro-uses. He classifies the micro-uses to include: discourses in the classroom, computer mediation i.e. internet, e-mail, text messaging etc education and literacy, gender, law, literature, mass media i.e. electronic and print, popular media i.e. film and entertainment, medicine, politics, religion, translating and interpreting. And at the macro-level he emphasises that, the use of English may be viewed in terms of the status of the language vis-a-vis other languages from the perspective of language policy and planning as well as language attitudes of Nigeria citizens.

The Nigerians exhibit positive attitude towards English Language. The micro and macro uses identified by Adegbite (2010) are peculiar with Nigerians. This preference makes most Nigerians to use English as a medium of communication on the internet more than any of the native languages. Short Message Service (SMS) is a service component of communication through the Global System of Mobile Communication (GSM) designed to allow the exchange of short text messages between users of mobile phones and can be exchanged between mobile phones and computers connected to the internet. The user of the GSM cannot exceed 160 characters which forms only a page as users are always surcharged by their service providers per page. This has culminated for the reasons for the innovative orthography.

The case is not the same with Facebook, users have no restriction with space to which they express themselves. According to Rambe (2012:295) Facebook is among the most trafficked social networking sites (SNSs) on the internet. She confirms that Facebook is the top ranked social networking site in the world with 550 million users. Rambe (2012) quoting World Wide Worx research estimated that there were approximately 4.2 million Twitter users in South Africa and that a Youth culture is visible on Facebook with almost a million aged 14-24 using the site for the exchanged of resources and informal learning. Given that many university students fall within this age group, it is expected that many have seamlessly integrated Facebook into their lives. This investigation is raising an alarm that the, innovative orthography is cunningly sneaking into the Standard English orthography by learners and it is fast growing because it meets the needs of majority of Nigerians which if allowed to continue might 'kill' the standard in the nearest future because language death is real (Crystal, 2010:1).

### **1. Significance of the Study**

There has been dearth of scholarly information on the fate of English Language in the era of cyber-technology in the field of linguistics and its effect on pedagogy. The few existing works of the internet age had been on their use and usages, linguistic manipulation as well as its orthography without given a close look at its implication on the future of the standard forms with the new innovative forms and their incursion on

English orthography. This investigation however will juxtapose the ‘new form’ with the standard form to enable the ESL teacher to as much as possible discourage the use of the new form of linguistic manipulation in formal setting.

## **2. Data Collection and Methodology**

Data were randomly sampled from Facebook post and text messages, the messages. According to Rotimi (2012:16), SMS is likely to have a negative effect on written language performance of the generation of the young people. Varied conversations on facebook post and text messages of some friends, colleagues and students in Nigeria were collected and were transcribed. The ‘new words’ were extracted and their meanings were sourced from the conversationalists. The new innovative words and their intended meanings were analysed. A cross sectional method of data collection was adopted for the study. This was to enable the analyst to make some comparative study of the forms of language used. Permission was taken from friends to allow the researcher to get access to their posts and conversations as well as their text messages with the assurance to keep a strict confidentiality of their conversations as a result of that all the conversations were anonymous.

## **3. Attitude of Nigerians toward the Cyber**

It has been confirmed in scholarly works that 90% of youth in the 21<sup>st</sup> century enjoy being on the net than reading books (Alabi, 2008; Faleke & Shehu, 2009; Rotimi, 2012; Adedimeji, 2012). Thirty percent read e-books and only for pure academic purpose. In the most parts of the world now both school and national libraries are under used. Most writers published on e-library platform. These have improved the production of hi- tech handsets and computer devices in the market.

Today android and smart phones are on high purchase; these devices help users to readily switch to the internet. It has been observed that students in the developing countries prefer to buy handsets than books. In Nigeria it has been observed that a person can own more than a phone with monthly subscriptions to enable him/her to access the internet. In general terms the kind of phone one uses declares one status. This is in corroboration with Adedimeji (2012:3) quoting Emeagwali, (2003) that, ‘the internet phone now enables one to communicate instantaneously with any person on the globe.’

In recent time, most students cluster around areas where there are free accesses to the internet - ICT centres and computer laboratories rather than the school library in most developing nations. Aside these assignments, seminar presentations, projects and other academic investigative materials are easily accessed on the internet through the search engines platforms than using the reference sections in the library with all these reasons books in the library shelves are becoming dusty with no one using them. Nowadays most post offices are striving to survive as information is easily transmitted through the internet via e-mail, fax, twitter, face book, YouTube and text messages, it is only when it is necessary that people go to the post office to send letters and parcels.

## **4. Literature Review**

The new linguistic innovation and its writing systems have had scholarly investigations in recent time, for example in Nigeria, Alabi (2008:194) calls it ‘method in madness’

when she investigated on the problems of an emergent written language of GSM in Nigeria, amongst the problems identified were incorrect spelling, arbitrary use of affixation, consequent difficulties with well-formed sentences and incorrect application of mechanics which she affirms would have a great chaotic effect on the formal teaching and learning of English Language.

In the same way Chilwa (2007: 95) referred to the 'new linguistic innovation' as 'emerging language', using SMS text messages as his data, affirms that, the vocabulary of the brand of the emerging language is more of 'Nigerianness' than elsewhere and that even in Nigeria it has no sufficient features to have a full incursion on the variety of English call Nigeria. Chilwa's idea of the 'emerging language' is so narrow in that he considers it to be only Nigerian and not happening elsewhere when the world has become a global village with the help of technology.

To further argue on Chilwa's view most people in the world have through facebook been connected to friends, many other associations have been made through it. Faleke & Shehu (2011) investigation on the incursion of the 'new' writing in students' essays in the West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) examination in English essays is enough evidence to refute Chilwa's findings. The investigation showed the vast growth of the text message writings and its incursion on the formal writing situation evident in the essay scripts of some secondary school students in Nigeria. They that noticed students were consciously writing the abbreviated form of the SMS writings during the formal situation. For example words like 'before' becomes 'b4', 'because' for 'beco/bcos', 'you' for 'u', 'your' for 'ur'. They argued that language is expressive and not distinctive, that the orthography of SE language is wholly fixed, acceptable universally. And advise that during a formal situation the SE orthography should be used.

Rotimi (2012) confirms that the perspectives of people on text messaging across the world is positive, given account of various scholarly evidences in Africa, Nigeria has overtaken South Africa to emerge as the largest mobile telecommunication market in Africa. This is evident in the four different service providers in Nigeria alone namely: MTN, Airtel, Globacom and Etisalat which are thriving. Rotimi further proofs that in Australia and South Africa, health professionals use SMS to increase their level of support, by making education and information available to patients; this is also operational in Nigeria where SMS serves as a channel for promos and advertisements of most companies in Nigerians.

Again Rotimi debunks the general belief people have about 'texting' that it has the tendency to foster a decline in literacy and that the graphic distinctiveness of SMS is not a totally new phenomenon and its use is not restricted to the young generation. He believes that: 'Texting has added a new dimension to language use, indeed but its long-term impact on the already existing varieties of language is likely to be negligible' (Rotimi, 2012:17). It should be noted that the cyber age is gradually eroding away the reading culture in most youth.

In the same vein Egbe and Ekpe (2009) argue that there is an incursion of 'new literacy', which is bringing 'new English' in the aspects of grammar of SMS/text messages confirming that certain idiosyncratic forms revealed new relations between reader and author on the one hand and the written English on the other. They further discuss the insight into how new literacy help learners learn about language and also

into the growing demand and trends of literacy in English in Nigeria. This is actually the crux of the matter! This means the ESL teacher needs to design a curriculum that will accommodate the new literacy with the old literacy. Crystal (2013) reveals that mobile handset is not only a technology for receiving and making calls, but it is also a veritable tool for communicating and receiving information in the hands of a resourceful user.

## 5. Findings

Data sampled from text messages and Facebook were tabularized as follows:

| <i>Deletion of Letters</i> | <i>Intended Words</i> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Apy                        | Happy                 |
| Dat                        | That                  |
| Suces                      | Success               |
| Message                    | Message               |
| Hw                         | How                   |
| U                          | You                   |
| Pls                        | Please                |
| D                          | The                   |
| Ur                         | Your                  |
| Bk                         | Book/Bank             |
| Schl                       | School                |
| Becos/bcos                 | Because               |
| B4                         | Before                |

2.

| <i>Number Homophones</i> | <i>Intended Words</i> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 4u                       | For you               |
| 10ks                     | Thanks                |
| 4get                     | Forget                |
| Brek2ru                  | Breakthrough          |
| In2                      | Into                  |
| 4my                      | For my                |
| 4christ                  | For Christ            |

3.

| <i>Phonemic Spelling</i> | <i>Intended Meaning</i> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Kamin                    | Coming                  |
| Thru                     | Through                 |
| Monin                    | Morning                 |
| Hapi                     | Happy                   |
| Betday                   | Birthday                |
| Continu                  | Continue                |
| Sukxed                   | Succeed                 |

4.

| <i>Deletion of letters in some words/sentence</i>                    | <i>Intended Meaning</i>                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (i). Hope u gud                                                      | Hope you are good.                                                     |
| (ii). Can y send message on it                                       | Can you send me a message on it?                                       |
| (iii). Sis my friend sent me a message dat she needs ur no to call u | Sister my friend sent a message that she needs your number to call you |
| (iv). D mum s Gh no ooo                                              | The mummy is in Ghana o!                                               |
| (v). God is gud                                                      | God is good.                                                           |
| (vi). Was hapi to hear from u                                        | Was happy to hear from you.                                            |
| (vii) Gwudaftanun                                                    | Good afternoon                                                         |
| (viii) Abi u don get work for there (pidgin)                         | Or have you got job there                                              |
| (ix). I m not dem one ooo                                            | I am not one of them right                                             |
| (x). We refyn n usr                                                  | We are fine and yours                                                  |
| (xi) Miss u                                                          | Missed/miss you                                                        |
| (xii). Sis mi ('mi' is Yoruba word )                                 | My sister                                                              |
| (xiii). Aoar u doing                                                 | How are you doing                                                      |
| (xiv). I jus got ur msg now                                          | I just got your message                                                |
| (xv) Oh nice junymacy                                                | Oh nice! Journey mercy                                                 |
| (xvi) I ve bin in UK for 2 was now                                   | I have been in UK for two years now                                    |

## 6. Discussion

The *Oxford Learner's Dictionary* (New 8<sup>th</sup> Edition) defines 'fate' as the things, especially, bad things that will happen or have happened to somebody or something or the power that is believed to control everything that happens and that cannot be stopped or changed. Going by the definition, it means that the destiny of the potency of the SE orthography is at stake in the cyber age especially as the activities of cyber continues to grow and the society continues to give their whole heart to, it could endangered the SE's orthography soon.

The findings have revealed that, there is a 'new innovation' in the orthography of English language ranging from deletion of letters, abbreviated form, coinage, deviant spellings, number homophones, phonemic spelling growing side by side the fixed and universally accepted orthography of the SE, for example the word 'that' is generally and universally accepted in the English language as 'that' and not 'dat'. Going by the phonemic analysis, the initial phoneme /ð/ is generally and universally known in the language to be a voiced dental fricative and not a voiced alveolar affricate as evident in the new innovative spelling seen above.

The number homophonic writings that the findings revealed are not only evident in the SMS writings alone but in Facebook; it corroborates what Faleke and Ibrahim (2011) identified in the essays of students in the WAEC examination in English language from 2006-2007. They argue that students have been so used to the SMS orthography that they were unable to discern between the formal and the informal writing situations and concluded that, the mass failure of many Nigerians in the subject at O'level is partly as a result of the incursion of SMS orthography which is an impediment to the English orthography in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Since the examiners marking



scheme is based on the standard orthography, students are always penalized for not using the SE orthography.

It has been observed that in SMS when the new innovative writings have been written, the system does not have any device to checkmate the wrong spellings thus giving the writer his free will. (Rotimi 2012; Faleke and Shehu 2011, Daniel 2012). But this is not so with computer where the spelling of the language the user switched to, would checkmate ones spelling and grammatical mistakes by underlining the word(s) with red ink to alert the user and the user in turn would check up the inbuilt dictionary of the language switched to, and the necessary corrections are affected. Surprisingly; the data from the Face book revealed the same deletion of letters yielding to SMS writings they have been used to. This is a proof that the warning the computer gives by underlining the wrong spellings are being ignored, and this is in agreement with what Crystal (2013:13) affirms that: ‘in blogs, social networking sites, web page forums and personal websites, there is little or no external editorial influence, we see writing there in its most naked form...’

Crystal (2013:13) mentions that “there is little... editorial influence on the cyber” to the writer on the Cyber the red ink underlines the wrong word(s) or the green ink that underlines are in a way the editorial which the user must be conscious of, or the user goes to the ‘help’ column to rectify the orthographic and grammatical problems that might surface. These are most times ignored by users on the social networking sites, blogs, web page forum and personal websites as Crystal has rightly confirmed. Hence sentences like: ‘D mum S Gh no oo o’ (i.e. The mother is in Ghana o, the ‘o’ as a marker to mean ‘right’) and ‘Ao ar a u doing’ (i.e. How are you doing) are posts on the facebook. These kinds of writings cannot help literacy if they are not taught side by side.

The task for the ESP teacher is to design a curriculum that would point out to the learners that they are to dissect the new innovative writing on the cyber from the standard orthography in a formal writing situation. As suggested by Egbe and Ekpe (2009) that the new literacy can help learners learn about the growing demand and trends of literacy in English in Nigeria. It has been observed that the new innovation in writing is fast growing among the generality of Nigerians and not only among the youths and young adults. Considering the fast growth in technology and vast number of cyber users confirmed by Rotimi (2012), the SE will soon be in extinction this is foregrounded in Crystal (2010) that languages do not kill languages their speakers do.

It was also observed in the data that the use of punctuation marks is lost it was rarely used in most of the data used. Rambe (2012) says it will be difficult for linguists to discourage the new innovation writing but to encourage it by juxtaposing the formal with the informal in the ESL curriculum there by creating awareness to the learners of their uses and usages. This is in corroboration with Diaz-Santos (2013:5) that ‘language and content – integrated learning is an expanding area of practice and research, with increasing recognition by both the language and content camps’. This is very necessary for the ESL teachers in Nigeria and elsewhere where English language is a hurdle for academic success and not a mere educational value.

## **7. Conclusion**

This paper is raising an alarm that the orthography of the SBE is gradually eroding away if not 'checkmate'. The work beckons on the ESL teacher to adopt integrated ESL curriculum where both the formal and the informal writing systems would be juxtaposed. The paper confirms that the new innovative writing is growing faster by majority of Nigerians through the social network and SMS. Its incursion into the formal writing situation have been confirmed by other scholars to render the SBE orthography impotent in the nearest future. This means that in the future, the fate of books, journals, Encyclopaedias and other periodicals written in SBE would be in the achieves and rendered as old or old English.

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## **11. A Thematic Study of Jean la Fontaine's Fable & Chinyereude's Chant: Implications for Minority Languages**

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Literature remains one of the significant means of intercultural communication. Whatever be the original language of composition of a literary work, it is often disseminated globally by translating it into other languages thereby producing World literature. This paper sets out to study two translated works, namely: La Fontaine's fable 'The Young Widow' translated from French into English and Chinyereude's chant 'Demise of Husband' translated from Igbo into English. The theme of widowhood presented in the French fable and the Igbo chant, made available to English readers through the efforts of translators, is an issue that continues to attract global attention. The Study shows that minority languages can increase their global influence through a two-way literary translation that entails translating literatures written in international languages into minority languages as well as translating literatures written in minority languages into other languages of the world. This would invariably lead to more African languages participating in Globalization as they would provide more material for comparative literature.

**Keywords:** *Intercultural communication, widowhood, Fable, Chant, Fontaine, Chinyereude.*

### **0. Introduction**

Intercultural studies contribute a lot to our understanding of our humanism. From primitive times to modern times, different societies express their worldview through their artistic creations including literature. Literature is conceived in the study as an imaginary and creative work of art produced to teach and to entertain. The literary history of a people often gives an insight into the prevalent sociocultural practices of the period under review. Literature can be oral or written. As spoken language precedes written language, oral literature often precedes written literature in most societies. The link between oral and written literature and the functionality of both as presented by Ebeogu (36), calls for the need to appreciate every literary piece in order to drink of the wisdom embedded in it. The evolution of written literature in Africa is a very welcome development because these are two different media of communication which should be seen as complements and not substitutes. Just like a language that no longer has speakers is seen as a dead language, an ethnolinguistic group that loses its oral literature is in a coma.

A number of scholars such as Toni-Duruaku (2004:101) have decried the present laxity of many Igbo parents in spending quality time with their children teaching them the folktales of their communities. Indeed, Nwokedi (2003:360, 368) shows in his study on



revitalization of the Igbo folktale that the written (print) and electronic methodology can never replace the oral medium in issues of cultural transmission. Moreover, Nwachukwu-Agbada (2008:35) underscores that literatures in our local languages are more relevant, more enduring and more learnable. Comparative literature, facilitated essentially through literary translation, enables us to enjoy the artistic creations of other worlds. On one hand, such an experience invariably culminates in mutual respect for one another, and on the other hand, leads to a reappraisal of our attitude to our natural endowments and potentials, thereby making literature highly functional. The functionality of literature is reechoed in current thematic surveys of literary works such as Agho's (2006:27) thematic study of Edoki's *The African Dream* and Uhuegbu's (2009:188) "A New Treatise on the Structure and Theme in Rene Maran's *Batouala*. Reflecting on Nigerian literary drama, Jays (2013:8) notes:

The thematic preoccupation of many of the plays published by Nigerian playwrights in the first decade of the twenty-first century reveal the sociopolitical, socioeconomic and sociocultural situation of the Nigerian nation of the period

Our work therefore anchors on the premise of functionality of oral literature and written literature as it undertakes a thematic treatise of Fontaine's fable "The Young Widow" and Chinyereude's chant 'Demise of a husband'. "The Young Widow" translated by Norman Shapiro, is an English translation of Jean La Fontaine's fable "La Jeune Veuve". Fontaine (1621-1695), the French Fabulist, is fondly remembered for his fables that transcend times and seasons assembled in his book *Fables* (1966). The chant 'Demise of Husband' translated into English by Uzochukwu (2001:136-137) is an Igbo oral rendition "Ọnwụ di", by Loolo Chinyereude. Our decision to study these two works of art situated in the domain of oral literature derives from the close semantic resemblance of their titles. Though the English word 'widowhood' and the French word 'le veuvage' imply the death of a spouse and its aftermath on the surviving spouse, the Igbo equivalent of widowhood could be 'ọnwụ di' (death of husband) or 'ọnwụ nwunye' (death of wife). Although widowhood is a recurrent theme in contemporary African Literature as could be seen in Although death is a recurrent theme in non-comic writings, it is noteworthy that whereas African literature is replete with the saga of the widow as could be seen in works such as Amadi's *The Concubine* (1988), Bâ's *So Long a Letter* (1979) Kourouma's *The Suns of Independence* (1968), Okediadi's Igbo poem 'Ọnwụ di' (2003) and Nkoro's *Ma Vie M'appartient* (2013), the writer is yet to know of any African literary work that deals with the experiences of a widower. Nevertheless, Caradec's (2001) study on widowhood focuses on widows and widowers and shows how they cope with the loss of their spouse. In what follows, we shall limit our discussion on widowhood to the experience of a widow as presented in Fontaine's 'Young Widow' and Chinyereude's 'Demise of Husband'.

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**1) The Young Widow (2011: <http://oaks.nvg.org/fonta6.html#tiyouwid>)**

A husband's death brings always sighs;  
The widow sobs, sheds tears—then dries.  
Of Time the sadness borrows wings;  
And Time returning pleasure brings.  
Between the widow of a year  
And of a day, the difference  
Is so immense,  
That very few who see her  
Would think the laughing dame  
And weeping one the same.  
The one puts on repulsive action,  
The other shows a strong attraction.  
The one gives up to sighs, or true or false;  
The same sad note is heard, whoever calls.  
Her grief is inconsolable,  
They say. Not so our fable,  
Or, rather, not so says the truth.  
To other worlds a husband went  
And left his wife in prime of youth.  
Above his dying couch she bent,  
And cried, "My love, O wait for me!  
My soul would gladly go with you!"  
(But yet it did not go.)  
The fair one's sire, a prudent man,  
Checked not the current of her woe.  
At last he kindly thus began:  
"My child, your grief should have its bound.  
What boots it him beneath the ground  
That you should drown your charms?  
Live for the living, not the dead.  
I don't propose that you be led  
At once to Hymen's arms;  
But give me leave, in proper time,  
To rearrange the broken chime  
With one who is as good, at least,  
In all respects, as the deceased."  
"Alas!" she sighed, "the cloister vows  
Befit me better than a spouse."  
The father left the matter there.  
About one month thus mourned the fair;  
Another month, her weeds arranged;

Each day some robe or lace she changed,  
Till mourning dresses served to grace,  
And took of ornament the place.  
The frolic band of loves  
Came flocking back like doves.  
Jokes, laughter, and the dance,  
The native growth of France,  
Had finally their turn;  
And thus, by night and morn,  
She plunged, to tell the truth,  
Deep in the fount of youth.  
Her sire no longer feared  
The dead so much endeared;  
But, as he never spoke,  
Herself the silence broke:  
"Where is that youthful spouse," said she,  
"Whom, sir, you lately promised me?"

2) **Demise of Husband** (Uzochukwu, 2001:136-137)

Six times a widow recalls the death of her husband  
When early yam-planting season sets in.  
She cries in memory of her husband and retires, dejected  
The second, during the cutting of yam-sticks.  
Who will supply her in good time with bamboo?  
She cries.  
After crying for long she stops.  
The third, when her palm fruits are ripe.  
She gazes at them helplessly and goes in.  
Would she defy custom and climb a palm tree?  
Widowhood has led to labour-hiring for the harvesting of  
Palm fruits  
Which service was rendered free in our infancy.  
The fourth, during the meeting of the husband's kindred.  
Who will inform the widow of the deliberations?  
The fifth, when a festival is in progress,  
Who will send the woman to Eke-Ututu for the  
Festival fowl  
Lastly, the widow cries uncontrollably for the deceased husband on  
The day she is drenched at the dead of night in her thatched house.  
That day, she knows nothing as painful as losing a husband.

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### 3. Thematic Analysis

#### 3.1 Grief

Death and life are universal themes that form the bedrock of other sub-themes. Apart from comedy where the writer determines to create a make-believe world where death and its attendant grief and sorrow are completely absent, other forms of literature are replete with instances of the ever running continuum of death and life as shown by Aire's (2004) captivating Inaugural Lecture "Thanatos and Eros: Death in Life and in French Literature" The writer is yet to know of any linguistic or cultural group that has no word for death. To the Igbo, 'onwụ na ndụ' (death and life) are complements just like 'nne na nna' (mother and father) or 'ji na ede' (yam and cocoyam'. With regards to our thematic discourse of Fontaine's fable 'The Young Widow' and 'Chinyereude's chant 'Onwu di', we are once more faced with the recurrent theme of the widow in the two works of art. Whereas Fontaine makes it clear that the widow in question is young, Chinyereude's chant does not indicate whether the widow is young or old. However, the grief and pain of the widow is aptly captured by the Fabulist and the Chanter:

Fontaine:      A husband's death brings always sighs  
                    The widow sobs, sheds tears, \_ then dries...

Chinyereude:    Six times a widow recalls the death of her husband  
                    ... She cries.  
                    She cries.  
                    After crying for long she stops...  
                    ... she knows nothing as painful as losing a husband.

It is evident from the above that pain is the common denominator in the life of the French widow and the Igbo widow. It is noteworthy that whereas the Igbo chant ends on hopelessness and despair, Fontaine's fable goes on to help us behold, in a very unusual but highly artistic manner, the paradox of death and life on one hand, and the paradox of sorrow and laughter on the other hand. The widow in Chinyereude's chant is all alone in her reminiscence of her dead husband whereas the widow in Fontaine's fable has company. It is highly instructive that the company she has is her wise father who gradually starts the process of her daughter's rehabilitation to life. He allows her to grieve for a while:

                    The fair one's sire, a prudent man,  
                    Checked not the current of her woe...

#### 3.2 Consolation

After allowing her young daughter a reasonable time to grieve over her husband's death, the wise father takes a step further in his rehabilitation efforts by kindly letting her know that she cannot mourn forever. He tells her "My child your grief should have its bound".

Thereafter, the prudent father encourages the daughter to ‘live for the living, not the dead’. He is so persuaded that our young widow can know mirth again that he subtly suggests re-marriage after some period of mourning:

I don’t propose that you be led  
At once to Hymen’s arms  
But give me leave, in proper time  
To rearrange the broken charm  
With one who is as good, at least  
In all respects, as the deceased

Engrossed in sorrow and not imagining ever living a normal life again, the young widow retorts:

Alas! She sighed, the cloister vows  
Befit me better than a spouse

### **3.3 Rehabilitation and Mirth**

Having sown the seed of consolation and hope in her daughter, ‘the father left the matter there’ knowing that time is a great healer. In the course of time, the young widow’s inner healing begins to manifest outwardly as she removes her mourning dresses, begins to wear her ornaments. Indeed, jokes, laughter and dance return as she plunges ‘deep in the fount of youth’. As evidence of her full rehabilitation and restoration to life, she excitedly asks the father:

Where is that youthful spouse...?  
Whom, sir, you lately promised me?

Hence, the young widow, through the father’s timely, kind and warm consolation, learns ‘how to make a constructive use of her reasoning faculty and education to transform for better and live well’ (Ogunyemi 2014: 90).

## **4. Implications for Minority Languages**

The phenomenon of minority languages, especially as it applies to Nigeria and other African countries, is to us, a political creation that leads to a gross neglect of many indigenous African languages whose speakers may not be part of the ruling class. Africa’s unfortunate colonial experience coupled with Africa’s multilingual disposition have led to several language planning and language engineering efforts which are far from placing all African languages at a pedestal that encourages their development and documentation. In Nigeria for instance, only three of her indigenous languages namely Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo are recognized as National languages. This implies that these three languages receive most of the Government’s attention at the expense of many other



Nigerian languages. Our study shows that speakers of minority languages in Nigeria and elsewhere can participate and contribute to the growth of world literature through their oral and written literatures. Every ethnolinguistic group is rich in oral literature. The speakers of minority languages that already have a writing system should make concerted efforts to reduce their oral literature to writing thereby having their own indigenous literature. Thereafter, the indigenous literature would be translated into English and other languages of the world.. Minority languages that have no orthography should strive to have one. They could start their march towards having orthography for their language by seeking advice from the Department of Linguistics and African Languages or Nigerian Languages in the State, Federal or Private Universities closest to them. A written message in any language has the potential of having a global impact when it is translated in other languages of the world. The fact that Anglophone readers are able to share in the wisdom expressed originally in French by Fontaine and in Igbo by Chinyereude because these non-English works were translated into English, should encourage speakers of minority languages to contribute their quota to world literature.

## **5. Conclusion**

Oral and written literatures are as closely related as speech and writing. The effervescence of speech and the permanency of writing make it imperative that oral literature must be written down. On one hand, when fables, chants and other forms of oral poetry of a particular culture are written down, the wisdom embedded in them is preserved for future generations. On the other hand, when such oral literatures expressed in one language are translated into other languages, their readership is widened thereby making them essential tools for world literature and comparative literature. The focus of the study was a thematic synopsis of Fontaine's fable 'The Young widow' translated from French by Shapiro and Chinyereude's Igbo chant 'Demise of Husband translated into English by Uzochukwu. Though the two works of art emanate from two different cultural backgrounds, both highlight primarily, the universal theme of death of a husband and its attendant grief and sorrow. Secondly, the didactic function of literature is sequentially presented in Fontaine's fable as the young widow in the course of time, through the kind consolation and encouragement of the father, recovers from a period of great grief devoid of mirth; to a period of restoration to life full of laughter, joy and dance. Since humans are mortals, the death of the other will inflict pain on us just like our death will inflict pain on the other. This puts a dual responsibility on every human. Firstly, the non-bereaved should help the grieving to see reason to live with the living. Secondly, the grieving ought to accept consolation and make room for laughter while they live. We therefore invite speakers of living languages in Nigeria, Africa and elsewhere, to forge ahead in hope and contribute to the growth of world literature by sharing available oral literature in their language, knowing that there are willing hands ready to translate them into other languages of the world.

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## **12. Translating Scientific Terms into Indigenous Languages: A Case for African Technological Development**

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For the most part, African languages appear well suited for the rendition of rich folklore that portrays a people with deep cultural roots, reminiscent of mankind's primeval beginnings. But in a modern technological environment, these languages would need to be linguistically configured for the rendition of objective data and scientific realities. In this paper, a case is made for translating scientific terms into African languages with a view to formulating and coining scientific terms where such terms may be lacking. This would involve analysing the components of technical discourse evident in languages that display them and developing similar components in indigenous African languages. Two African languages of the Niger-Congo phylum, Kalabari and Yoruba, will be studied vis-à-vis two European languages of the Indo-European language family: English and French. By translating scientific terms from languages where such already exist, it is hoped that the African languages under study would be amenable to the kind of scientifically-motivated technical discourse necessary for a technological breakthrough for the African continent.

**Keywords:** *scientific realities, technical discourse, language families, linguistic configuration, technological breakthrough.*

### **Introduction**

Looking at the proliferation of technological artifacts and the constant applications of science all around us, one can safely say that the language of the modern era is the language of science. Speakers of human languages, the world over, would therefore need to tune in linguistically to feel a part of it. It is for this reason that African languages, as languages spoken in a modern era, have every interest to follow the modern scientific trend and every linguistic effort made to achieve this in a technological direction. Understanding and expressing oneself in the language of science is in fact, a *sine qua non* to survive successfully in an age which is currently characterized by the manifestations of science. Such manifestations would include solar panels, wind turbines, nanotechnology, laser beams, wireless devices, cybernetics – so many new terms requiring linguistic expression in every language spoken in a modern era.

From a synchronic viewpoint, all African languages are *de facto* languages spoken in the twenty-first century. They therefore need to express, or at least find expression, for the scientific formulations and the technological manifestations of the century in which they live and operate. A diachronic existence in a synchronic reality can no longer be permitted. Refusal to come to terms with the linguistic exigencies of the times may result

in, at best, language endangerment, and at worst, language death for any group of speakers that persist in non-modern forms of expression. Already, many developing languages are grappling with passing on encoded linguistic wisdom to their progeny, a task which could be made much simpler by passing on linguistic terms that relate to the actual objects the latter can perceive and touch in their immediate environment. For younger speakers in most modern African environments, such objects include plasma television sets, laser printers, pin-hole surgical procedures, internet operations, Bluetooth transfers, wireless operations, amongst so many other technological-age realities.

Translating scientific terms into African indigenous languages would require an explanation of the scientific underpinnings of modern technological inventions in the child's mother tongue. As aptly noted by Benjamin Lee Whorf, one of the duo in the famous Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, "We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages". This would mean that the native languages or the indigenous languages of African speakers would have to develop enough terms to express scientific realities for African children to dissect their natural environment through words now present in their languages. Even more to the point is Sapir's pertinent observation that we visualize best objects and things for which we have words in our native languages.

The present study is being undertaken in the optic that the translation of scientific and technical terms would result in a scientific terminological data bank for the languages under study and help point speakers of the targeted indigenous languages in a technological direction. The indigenous languages in question in this paper are Kalabari and Yoruba, both African languages of the Niger-Congo language family, and they are being studied vis-a-vis English and French, two languages that belong to the Indo-European language family, where scientific terms seem to find ready expression. It would be instructive to try to determine the reasons why this is so and to try and discern what African languages, using Kalabari and Yoruba as models, would need to do to attain the same ready mode of expression in them. According to Afolayan (1980:53), every language has the capacity to say anything in it. Fromkin and Rodman (1998:14) reiterate same when they assert that no language or variety of a language (that is, a dialect) is superior to any other in a linguistic sense. In their view, every grammar is equally complex and logical and capable of producing an infinite set of sentences to express any thought. If something can be expressed in one language or dialect, it can be expressed in any other language or dialect. It might involve different means and different words, but it can be expressed. We fully subscribe to the expressed opinions of the aforementioned authors.

In this study, we have termed some languages, notably our source languages for translation, languages of science. We shall proceed to see what attributes have earned them this appellation. This is in the belief that a good understanding of these attributes would provide the right environment for a linguistic configuration of our chosen target languages in a scientific direction.

### **Source Languages: Languages of Science**

What qualifies a language to be called a language of science? Crystal (2007:384) provides an answer by stating that a language of science would be one that possesses a scientific

vocabulary and displays a scientific grammar. In more accessible parlance, this means it would be a language that contains words reflecting the specialized subject matter of scientific domains of enquiry. It would also mean that the language would display certain elaborate grammatical features, such as passive constructions, complex forms, etc.

Enumerating the features of technical or scientific discourse, Vinay and Martin (1976:19) mentioned the following as necessary characteristics, among others:

- a. A near-total absence of distinction between oral and written discourse
- b. A homogeneous use of language resulting in the absence of language registers
- c. An objectivity in communication resulting in the disappearance of all processes that may entail sentiments or subjective appreciations
- d. The precision and concision that is necessary for technical information, which gives rise to complex lexical units, etc.

A pertinent poser: do African languages like Kalabari and Yoruba possess any of the features listed above to enable them express scientific matter? If not, how can they be linguistically configured to do so? It might serve our purpose to take a closer look at the linguistic configuration of our source languages, English and French which, for the purposes of this study, have been termed science language models. This is solely for the reason that, as at the present moment, scientific matter, whether printed or electronic, finds fluent expression in them. For example, *chemistry*, a branch of natural science, has its equivalent in French as *la chimie*. How would we say this in Kalabari? Or in Yoruba? Knowing the definition of chemistry as the scientific study of the structure of substances, how they react when combined or in contact with one another, could lead to an informed formulation of the right terms in the said languages. Appropriate curriculum development in these languages would therefore be another necessary step in writing science in the indigenous language.

At this point, it might be instructive to study the linguistic configurations of the languages adopted here as 'science language models'. This study is being done with a view to determining areas of linguistic similarity that could facilitate the development of a model for writing science in the indigenous languages for this paper: Kalabari and Yoruba. This might help furnish a better understanding of the scientific underpinnings of the said languages.

### Science Language Models

By science language models is meant those languages that have developed lexicological and grammatical frameworks for expressing scientific and technical facts. These models are to be developed by the indigenous speakers of the language, usually by dint of carrying out scientific procedures in it. It could be argued that the industrial development of the African continent, and by extension its scientific development, was truncated by the invasive presence of colonizing powers in the early part of Africa's technological civilization. That notwithstanding, the momentum needed for the linguistic sophistication of a language can be achieved at any point in time, and the surest way to do this would be



when native speakers consciously set out to evolve needed terms in their language. This, in effect, is what is being attempted in this paper.

### ❖ **Science Language Model 1: English**

The first science language model whose linguistic configuration we wish to consider in this study is English. Although, according to estimates provided by Crystal (2003: 289) Mandarin Chinese is spoken by a greater number of people, English is spoken around the globe and has wider dispersion than any other language. According to its linguistic classification, English belongs to the Germanic phylum of the Indo-European language family. It is the principal language of the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, and many newly independent islands in the Caribbean. It is also the official language of more than a dozen African countries, including Nigeria.

Crystal (2003: 360) notes that, going by conservative estimates, mother-tongue speakers of English in the world today have reached around 400 million, and a further 350 million use it as a second language, while another 100 million use it fluently as a foreign language. In its orthography, English can be seen to be more out of harmony with the spoken language than that of many other languages. Nevertheless, many observers note that advantages exist to the relative distance between orthography and speech in that written English is remarkably uniform throughout the world, and printed material can be distributed internationally without adaptation.

Concerning its vocabulary expansion, Comrie (1987:126) explains that compounding, prefixing and suffixing are largely responsible for adding to the word stock of the English language. A few examples from English technical vocabulary may suffice to illustrate this process:

| <b>Lexeme</b>   | <b>Prefixation</b> | <b>Prefixation + Suffixation</b> |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| Radiate (verb)  | irradiate          | irradiation                      |
| Generate (verb) | regenerate         | regeneration                     |
| Ionize (verb)   | de-ionize          | de-ionization                    |
| Pole (noun)     | bipolar            | bipolarity                       |

In our view, the challenge before all indigenous African speakers and linguists is to be able to reproduce the above technical vocabulary model in their respective languages. This challenge has been taken up in this paper by its reproduction in Yoruba as a proposed model for technical discourse in the language.

Syntactically, English is an SVO language, a fact which has been adduced as one of the reasons for its current widespread use in the world. It is noteworthy that one of the indigenous African languages in this study, Yoruba, shares this syntactic structure. This is a feature that will expectedly facilitate the development of technical discourse, and by extension scientific terms, in the language.

### ❖ Science Language Model 2: French

Rowlett (2007:3) affirms that the French language is currently classed as the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> most widely spoken language in the world. It is a Romance language which derives, via Latin, from the Italic branch of the Indo-European language family. Statistics provided by Battye *et al* (2000: 2) show that, according to a 1999 French government report, about 112,660,000 French speakers are classified as *francophones réels* (i.e. first or second-language speakers who use French daily), while another 60,612,000 speakers are classified as *francophones occasionnels* (i.e. speakers often living in developing countries or bilingual societies, using French occasionally). To these numbers are added approximately 100 to 110 million learners of French as a foreign language. Taking the upper limit therefore, one could safely place the current number of French speakers and French users at 283,272,000 million worldwide. Crystal (2003: 384) also mentions that, apart from the large number of autonomous French speakers within Europe, outside Europe, indigenous French is spoken in Francophone Canada, in the West Indies, and in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia). In Black Africa, French is the official language of sixteen independent Francophone states.

Phonologically, French sounds are mostly not indicative of their orthography (cf. *bleu*, *peur*; *brun*, *brune*; *vielle*, *ville*; etc.). However, French is similar to Yoruba in that it is also a language that makes use of tone or accent marks to aid pronunciation and distinguish certain words in the language (cf. *la*, *là*; *ou*, *où*; *du*, *dû*; *mais*, *maïs*; etc.). This is probably what informed the lexicographer, R.C. Abraham, in his choice of French words as examples to illustrate the Yoruba tonal system in his dictionary! (cf. Abraham, 1958: xi). It is also similar to Kalabari in this respect except perhaps in the use of low tone diacritic signs (e.g. ‘ẹ’ [ɛ], ‘ọ’ [ɔ], etc.), a feature which Kalabari shares with Yoruba, its Niger-Congo family counterpart.

Zufferey & Moeschler (2010:83) note that, in its syntactic structure, the order of basic constituents in French is SVO, i.e. the subject (which is obligatory) precedes the verb, which precedes the complement(s) in positive, declarative utterances. Also noteworthy is the fact that alongside this SVO order, there is a wide variety of other possible orders, involving the dislocation of one or more nominal elements associated with a verb to the left and/or to the right of the core sentence.

e.g.: J’aime Marie (Je-Subject, aime-Verb, Marie-Object/Complement)

But: Marie, je l’aime; Moi, j’aime Marie; Je l’aime, Marie, etc.

With respect to its morphological configuration, the derivational processes of French are here examined with particular emphasis on word formation techniques which appear to facilitate technical expression in it. Whereas prefixation is the more productive word formation process in Yoruba, suffixation is the affixal process which ensures, to a greater extent, the lexical growth in the French language. Words which depict an action or a process mostly bear the suffix ‘-age’ or ‘-ion’ in the language. To portray the doer or agent of an action, the suffix ‘eur’ is used and this is often derived from the ‘-age’ suffixal formation. Some examples, drawn from Vigner and Martin (1976:22-23) are given below:

| Verb                | Noun (Process)       | Noun (Agent)        |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Broyer (to grind)   | broyage (grinding)   | broyeur (grinder)   |
| Démarrer (to start) | démarrage (starting) | démarreur (starter) |
| Souder (to weld)    | soudage (welding)    | soudeur (welder)    |
| Forer (to drill)    | forage (drilling)    | foreur (driller)    |

As a technical discourse paradigm, we shall attempt to replicate the above technical model in our indigenous language models further on in this paper.

### Target Languages: ‘Scientifized’ Language Models

The term ‘scientifized’ language models has been used in this paper to describe the indigenous African languages to be adapted for scientific renditions in this study. As earlier quoted (cf. Fromkin and Rodman, 1998), every language is perfectly capable of expressing whatever its speakers wish to express in it; this might simply mean using different methods and different words. In this section therefore, the configuration of our two selected indigenous language models of the Niger-Congo phylum, Kalabari and Yoruba, are studied here with particular attention to their linguistic configurations.

#### ❖ Kalabari

The Kalabari language is one of the ijoid languages of the Niger-Congo family of languages. More specifically, it belongs to the East Ijo group. According to Williamson and Timitimi (1983) and later Jenewari (1989), other members of this group are Okrika, Ibani, Bille and perhaps Nkoro. Dapper (2003) likewise affirms that Kalabari is one of the Ijaw tribes that live in the Niger-Delta region. Among these languages, we have Izon, Nembe, Bille, Kula, Ibani, Tombia, Okrika, etc. Speakers can be found everywhere in the world but more specifically in a state called Rivers in Nigeria, West Africa.

Concerning the orthography of Kalabari, Harry (2005:10) informs that the first individual attempts in this direction were in 1949 when B.A. Harry published a primer with the title “*Kalabari tari go diri*” (*Kalabari Primer*), followed by another primer, this time written by N.T. Akobo in 1953 with the title “*Wa nimi n’ibi ai*” (*Things we ought to know*). It was only after these individual efforts that the government sponsored orthography projects in indigenous languages, thereby paving the way for primers in Kalabari written by erudite scholars like Berepiki (1971), Williamson (1972) and Jenewari (1972). Recently, some speakers have been using more modern means to diffuse the language. Such is the case of Dawari Braide whose electronic English-Kalabari dictionary is in preparation for online consultation. The virtual website is at [www.kalabari-dictionary.org](http://www.kalabari-dictionary.org). In real terms however, a dictionary in manuscript form that has been in the possession of the late Professor Kay Williamson, has been released for online viewing by Roger Blench. This can be consulted online using the internet. This manuscript, which serves as an authentic dictionary, can be accessed at [www.rogerblench.info/Language/Niger-Congo](http://www.rogerblench.info/Language/Niger-Congo).

At the phonological level, Kalabari is a tonal language like French. Harry (2007: 686) explains that words in the language are produced with the use of pitch in combination with sound segments (vowels and consonants). Certain similarities can be observed

between these two languages. For example, the phonetic symbols of [i] and [ĩ] represent the same sounds in both languages as in ‘ici’ [isi] (French) and ‘igoni’ [igoni] (Kalabari); ‘frère’ [frɛr] (French) and ‘lɛgi’ [lɛgi] (Kalabari). However, it would be noted that in the second example, Kalabari uses a diacritic sign ‘ɛ̃’ where French uses a low accent ‘è’ to represent the same sound. Diacritic signs or marks are actually signs which, when added to a letter, modify its value, or make it possible to distinguish between two homographs (homographic words). According to Dapper (2003:ix), these marks make it possible to distinguish between the following letters in the Kalabari alphabet and their resultant change in meaning:

b; ɓ as in bele; ɓele (clear; shift)  
 d; ɗ as in dein; ɗima (peace; change)  
 e; ɛ̃ as in mie; miɛ̃ (this, do)  
 i; ĩ as in iri; ĩria (dry; young girl)  
 o; ɔ̃ as in obiri; ɔ̃bɔkɔ̃ (dog; chicken)  
 u; ɯ as in ikulele; ĩkua (iron; coral bead).

### ❖ Yoruba

According to Williamson’s classification (1989:23), Yoruba belongs to Benue-Congo, a sub-group of the Niger-Congo language family. The vast majority of speakers are found in Nigeria in the Southwestern States of Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Oyo, and in some parts of Edo, Kogi and Kwara. Speakers are also found in the West Indies, Brazil, Cuba, Sierra Leone, and in some West African countries like Benin and Togo. Recent figures provided by Crystal (2003:289) put the number of Yoruba speakers at 25 million worldwide.

Pulleyblank (1987:142) informs that, morphologically, the word formation processes in Yoruba are for the most part derivational and not inflectional, and they involve two basic processes: prefixation and reduplication. These again fall into two classes: an ‘abstract’ class and an ‘agentive’ class. Prefixes of the agentive class include ‘a-’, ‘o/ò’ and ‘olu-’ among others. With respect to the prefixes that form abstract nouns from verb phrases, Rowlands (1969:184) notes that these are basically two: ‘i-’ and ‘a-’. Both prefixes may attach to a simple verbal base, e.g. ‘imọ’ – knowledge (mọ - know); ‘alọ’ – going (lọ - go). In many cases, ‘i-’ and ‘a-’ can be freely substituted for each other, e.g. ‘isọye’, ‘asọye’ (explanation). Bamgbose (1992:x) makes a case for using these two prefixes for semantically distinctive purposes, i.e. the prefix ‘i-’ used for the abstract noun (i.e. the process), and the prefix ‘a-’ or ‘à-’ for the concrete noun (i.e. the result).

Concerning the syntactic structure of Yoruba, it could be said that its basic word order is SVO, i.e. Subject preceding Verb preceding Object. Pulleyblank gives an example of this word order in the following sentence:

- Baba (Noun) ra (Verb) Bata (Object) – Father buys shoes

Awobuluyi (1979: 20) gives the same word order as Subject-Predicator-Object, and illustrates with the following example:

- Ojo ra moto (Ojo buys a car).

This word order is however not fixed and could be differently altered by versatile language users. Nevertheless, it is generally agreed that the S-V-O structure of the Yoruba language makes it easy to learn and, as will be demonstrated further on, it is a feature Yoruba shares with many other widely diffused languages of the world.

Semantically, words in Yoruba can be made to say almost anything. The language displays all the semantic processes of polysemy, antonymy, synonymy, homonymy, etc. To ensure its vocabulary expansion, one of the techniques employed is what NEIDA & NERDC (1988) refer to as semantically-motivated coinage. This is described as a technique which involves the meaning-bearing elements of one language with a view to capturing the meanings or essence of a term or expression in another language (e.g. ‘ranmupe’ – nasalization). Another semantic resource is the technique of semantic extension. This is a process aimed at increasing the number of distinct meanings found in the language. An example, to cite just one, is the word ‘opo’, which in the language means ‘an upright pole supporting the roof’, but has, by semantic extension also come to mean, ‘the stem of a word’ (morphology), ‘an electric pole’ (lexis), or ‘an extreme point in an electrical circuit’ (Physics).

Phonologically, Yoruba is a tonal language and tone marks play a distinctive role in it. There are also diacritic signs placed under certain letters to mark a down step or low-tone as in ‘e/ẹ’; ‘o/ọ’; ‘s/ṣ’; etc. This phenomenon also occurs in Kalabari. There are basically three tones: High, represented by an acute accent ( ´ ); Mid, generally unmarked; and Low, represented by a grave accent ( ` ). As noted by Katzner (1995), these accents do not indicate stress but rather the rise and fall of the voice. More importantly, however, it can be noted that several words or sets of lexical items are often distinguished by tone in Yoruba. Examples include: ‘igbá’ (calabash); ‘gba’ (two hundred); ‘ìgbà’ (time). ‘òkò’ (hoe); ‘òkọ’ (husband); ‘òkọ’ (vehicle), etc.

Scientifically, a group of forward-looking Yoruba speakers have launched a website tagged CEYOLONG (Centre for Yoruba Engineering). In Yoruba, this is written as: ‘Ibi iṣẹ́ fún ọ̀nà ìṣàmùlò Èdè Yorùbá’. This can be accessed at [www.ceyolong.org](http://www.ceyolong.org). According to the website developers, it is a centre “that seeks to promote the Yoruba language as a major instrument for transmitting scientific and technological knowledge, especially to the Yoruba at the grassroots... using the Yoruba medium.”

At this point, we wish to reproduce the technical discourse paradigm that was developed in French, but this time in the Yoruba language. This was achieved using the morphological processes of prefixation and partial reduplication as demonstrated below:



| <b>Verb</b>         | <b>Noun (Process)</b>   | <b>Noun (Agent)</b>                                  |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| lọ (grind)          | lilọ (grinding)         | alagbalọ (grinder/human)<br>ọlọ (grinder/non-human)  |
| şina (start engine) | şışina(starting engine) | aşina (starter/human)<br>işina (starter/non-human)   |
| jorin (weld iron)   | jijorin (iron welding)  | ajorin(welder/human)<br>ijorin (welder/non-human)    |
| gbẹho(drill)        | gbigbẹho(hole drilling) | agbẹho (driller/human)<br>igbẹho (driller/non-human) |

### **Translating Scientific Terms into Indigenous Languages**

In our view, translating scientific terms into indigenous languages means evolving lexicological parameters and applying translation strategies to help a language cope with aspects of modernity. We therefore wish to note the various grammatical and lexicological efforts by the speakers of our two African languages to push their languages forward in this respect. Concerning the Kalabari language, the Kalabari Language Development Unit, a section of a larger body called The Kalabari Bible Translation & Liturgical Review Committee, is currently proposing newly coined terms for numerals in Kalabari to reflect the counting system, using the modern metric system. In the words of the developers of the work (which is in press): “We are in a modern and fast-evolving age. If we do not meaningfully adapt, we will not be able to effectively communicate with other lingual cultures”. This is modern wisdom indeed.

Prior to the above proposals for counting numerals in Kalabari, the counting system involved a rather complicated mental process of subtractions, and then additions, to arrive at the given numeral. For example, to count 5,555, an indigenous Kalabari person would say: “tẹsi ofori ngie ẹendẹ fa jei na jei na”. Meaning: “sixty MINUS five thousand, six hundred PLUS fifteen”. In other words, five thousand six hundred minus sixty plus fifteen. And all this long calculation for just a four digit figure! What is more, this counting system cannot handle higher numerals, the highest numeral that is expressed in the language being 8000. In a modern age where the world talks in millions, billions, trillions, and even zillions, surely every living language would be well advised to catch up and reflect this aspect of modernity in its expressions?

It is therefore with this preoccupations in mind that members of The Kalabari Language Development Unit took it upon themselves to propose a new approach whereby ten (10) is used as the base figure and a buildup can occur from there to any desired number, that is, up to a million and above. They therefore propose the following, in opposition to the old system:

| <b>Figure</b> | <b>Old Counting System</b> | <b>New Proposed Counting System</b> |
|---------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Ten (10)      | Oyi (aati)                 | Oyi                                 |
| Twenty (20)   | Si                         | Maa oyi (two tens)                  |
| Thirty (30)   | Suei                       | Tɛra oyi (three tens)               |
| Forty (40)    | Mesi                       | Inia oyi (four tens)                |
| Fifty (50)    | Mesi oyi finji             | Sɔnɔa oyi (five tens)               |
| Sixty (60)    | Tesi                       | Sonioa oyi (six tens)               |
| Seventy (70)  | Tesi oyi finji             | Sɔnɔma oyi (seven tens)             |
| Eighty (80)   | Inia si                    | Niinea oyi (eight tens)             |
| Ninety (90)   | Inia si oyi finji          | Esenia oyi (nine tens)              |
| Hundred (100) | Sɔnɔa si                   | Qndira                              |

It will be observed from the above list that the terms in the old counting system are not consistent and so will not be easy for young minds (those who are to carry on the language) to retain. The new proposed system has uniformity, one of the attributes of technical discourse, and a basic requirement for writing science in a language. Further efforts could then work on making the proposed terms more concise and more succinct in order to better capture and express the scientific thought.

Based on the above lexicological format, the proposers are able to build up higher figures that enable counting up to a million, and then a billion and then a trillion and higher in Kalabari as shown below:

| <b>Figure in English</b>            | <b>Proposed Figure in Kalabari</b> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Hundred (100)</b>                | <b>Qndira</b>                      |
| Two hundred (200)                   | Maa qndira                         |
| Three hundred (300)                 | Tɛra qndira                        |
| <b>One thousand (1000)</b>          | <b>Gbɔru tawa</b>                  |
| Two thousand (2000)                 | Maa tawa                           |
| Three thousand (3000)               | Tɛra tawa                          |
| <b>One million (1000000)</b>        | <b>Gbɔru milia</b>                 |
| Two million (2000000)               | Maa milia                          |
| Three million (3000000)             | Tɛra milia                         |
| <b>One billion (1000000000)</b>     | <b>Gbɔru bilia</b>                 |
| Two billion (2000000000)            | Maa bilia                          |
| Three billion (3000000000)          | Tɛra bilia                         |
| <b>One trillion (1000000000000)</b> | <b>Gbɔru tirilia</b>               |
| Two trillion (2000000000000)        | Maa tirilia                        |
| Three trillion (3000000000000)      | Tɛra tirilia, etc.                 |

As the above illustrates, the speakers of a language are best placed, using the internal resources of that language, to propose terms in it. The linguistic resources of any language are vast: they could be morphological, phonological, lexical, syntactic, morpho-phonemic, and so on. For example, in the last case of “One trillion”, the writers proposed a term that

would be in conformity with the phonological structure of the Kalabari language which is CV-CV (Consonant-Vowel) when a consonant starts a word. Thus we have “tirilia” to translate “trillion”, and not “trilia”. This is an important point to note during lexicological formulations in any language. It is a translation strategy which Iyalla-Amadi (2000: 125) calls ‘phonologically integrated loanword’.

For our part, we have proposed some other terms of scientific and technological import in the Kalabari language. A trilingual glossary reveals such terms as:

| <b>Kalabari</b>    | <b>French</b> | <b>English</b> |
|--------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>Oḥokumaye</i>   | réfrigérateur | refrigerator   |
| <i>oḥirimaye</i>   | radiateur     | radiator       |
| <i>Samunḥumaye</i> | séchoir       | drier          |
| <i>Gbeḥeye</i>     | broyeur       | grinder, etc.  |

The terms above were formulated using the criteria for the rendition of technical discourse and also through the application of some key procedures for translating technical and scientific matter into other languages. One such criterion is the need for concision and precision when expressing technical matter, and so the first term: *Oḥokumaye* is a compounding and contraction of the longer paraphrase *wa ke ye oḥokumaar' ḥeye* (what we use to keep things cold). Other translation strategies include semantically-motivated neologisms, as in ‘*Gbeḥeye*’. A neologism is a coinage to fill a lacuna in the language through sense similarities. Thus, the author has exploited the similarity between the verb depicting the action of grinding in Kalabari (*ye gbe*) and the nouns ‘grinder’ and ‘broyeur’ in English and French respectively to coin the term ‘*Gbeḥeye*’ in Kalabari.

For our second “scientified” indigenous language model, Yoruba, we have developed a paradigm of lexicological terms formulated by us. This framework of lexicologically evolved terms represents a demonstration of translating technical terms into the indigenous language; first by taking cognizance of the scientific realities in one’s environment, and then by taking conscious and deliberate linguistic steps to translate terms that will have technological import. For us, this is the most viable way to promote the buildup of a scientific vocabulary in any given language. For clarity through repetition, we have chosen to reproduce that framework of translated technical terms in the Yoruba language below:

| <b>Verb</b>         | <b>Noun (Process)</b>    | <b>Noun (Agent)</b>                                  |
|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| lọ (grind)          | lilọ (grinding)          | alagbalọ (grinder/human)<br>ọlọ (grinder/non-human)  |
| ṣina (start engine) | ṣiṣina (starting engine) | aṣina (starter/human)<br>iṣina (starter/non-human)   |
| jorin (weld iron)   | jijorin (iron welding)   | ajorin (welder/human)<br>ijorin (welder/non-human)   |
| gbẹho (drill hole)  | gbigbẹho (hole drilling) | agbẹho (driller/human)<br>igbẹho (driller/non-human) |

In pursuance of the translation of technical and scientific terms to capture the manifestation of scientific matter using the Yoruba language, we would like to identify strongly with the very commendable effort of one Engr. J.A. Odetayo (1993) who has compiled an English-Yoruba Dictionary of Engineering Physics. A random sample of some of the scientific translations in the dictionary include:

|                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Aerodynamics   | imọ aayan alafẹfẹ |
| Bifocal        | eleeeji atẹjumọ   |
| Calibrate      | fiyele iwọn       |
| Dielectric     | ida ojiji         |
| Fulcrum        | itilẹ             |
| Gravity        | ifalulẹ           |
| Hydrostatic    | ẹkọ aisunra omi   |
| Ionization     | igbeero           |
| Kinematics     | imọ işipo         |
| Radioactivity  | akitiyan afẹka    |
| Velocity ratio | afiyeweye iyana   |

### Conclusion

In this paper, we set out to demonstrate that it is possible for an indigenous African language to acquire scientific and technical vocabulary to reflect technological thought based on an existing language that can serve as a science model. The two indigenous languages of this study, Kalabari and Yoruba, both of the Niger-Congo family, have indeed shown that they can be amenable to lexicological configurations to match the translated scientific terms from English and French, both adopted languages of science of the Indo-European phylum. Translating scientific terms is akin to writing science in the indigenous language. One of the most important attributes needed to do this is the willingness of the speakers to keep up with their times scientifically and technologically. Such was demonstrated by the Kalabari who took the bull by the horns by proposing a metric counting system to facilitate the expression of scientific thought and formulations for the younger generation of Kalabari speakers. Such has also been demonstrated by the Yoruba who have even gone ahead to open a website using the Yoruba language, as well as developing terms in engineering physics, using the internal resources of the language.

On the part of the present author, certain translation strategies, such as phonologically integrated loanwords, have been applied. This could be said to be a phonological combination of Vinay and Darbelnet's (1977:47, 52) *l'emprunt* (borrowing), and *l'adaptation* (adaptation to the culture of the indigenous environment), amongst others. We have also applied lexicological considerations to evolve technical terms in Yoruba by proposing a paradigm of technical words, and pointing the way to future formulations through translations in our selected indigenous languages.

One may perhaps conclude by making a case for African languages to be 'scientified'. For us, the process of scientification would entail the ability, through the development of scientific terminology and using appropriate linguistic strategies, to

express scientific and technological matter using one's own indigenous language in such a way as to translate such matter into physical manifestations for an improved standard of living in consonance with the realities of modern times. Developing a scientific consciousness through scientific and technical vocabulary can occur through teaching young children concepts of science and technology in the indigenous language right from the primary level. This would enable them to 'see' or visualize better these concepts through the words of their language and so place them in a position to properly "dissect [their natural environment] along lines laid down by [their indigenous] languages" (Benjamin Lee Whorf).

A worthy conclusion would be the following recommendation by Awe and Oluwole (1992:10) which, in the context of this work, can be considered quite *à-propos*:

It will be necessary to start the teaching and diffusion of science and technology in our indigenous languages so that the Nigerian child and the vast majority of Nigerians that are literate in English [and French] can perceive it as part of the culture of humankind.



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## **13. Translating Texts in English into Sleeping Languages: Basic Issues for Consideration**

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When a language is getting lost in a multilingual setting because it is scarcely being used due to frequent use of other dominant languages, or some natural or man-made disasters leading to the death of the language users, language endangerment is said to occur. A language is said to be sleeping if it has ceased to be used by its speakers for a relatively long time, but it can be awakened. One of the inherent contradictions of globalization is that it does not actually encourage the inter-dependence of independent nations, although it preaches it. What is long observed to be the chief intent of globalization is the deliberate integration of nation-states around the world through selected socio-economic and cultural identities. One of the most distinguished of these identities is language, being the most effective means by which the global interaction or communication is facilitated. Unfortunately, very few languages of the technologically advanced nations are being somewhat strictly used at the international level, to the utter neglect of other languages. As partly claimed, the languages of these advanced nations have to be accepted and used following the acceptance and use of their civilization, especially with regard to science and technology. Accordingly, globalization in this paper is viewed as the fundamental cause of language sleeping (and endangerment). In this way, translating texts in English into these Nigerian indigenous sleeping languages will contribute to their awakening, revival, and survival. The basic translation issues are *form*, *invariance* and *equivalence*. They are identified and briefly explained separately to help in translating English texts into Nigerian sleeping languages in order to help prompt a continuous translation into the sleeping languages.

**Key words:** *Translating, Texts in English, Sleeping Languages, Basic Issues for Consideration*

### **Introduction**

The importance of language to a society can be equated to the people themselves who make up the society, and without whom a society does not exist. A brief moment of imagining a society without a natural human language reveals that the society cannot be a normal one. Thus, the extinction of a language could immediately suggest the *death* of all the people who use the language. This accounts for why if language endangerment is being discussed, the question of the *living* and the *death* are evidently attracted. Crystal (2001:1) is convinced with this language question:

The phrase *language death* sounds as stark and final as any other in which that word makes its unwelcomed appearance. And it has similar implications and resonances. To say that a language is death is like saying that a person is death. It could be no other way – for languages have no existence without people.

A language dies when nobody speaks it any more. For native speakers of the language in which this book is written, or any other thriving language, it is difficult to envision such a possibility.

Crystal's last paragraph is particular about the possibility that language can be said to have died if no one uses it, but not necessarily the users are all death. However, those languages so called *endangered* are actually regarded as *sleeping* in this paper, provided they will later be 'awakened' through their both literary and non-literary documentation. Crystal's statement could thus be projected into two concepts: *endangered language* and *sleeping language*.

When a language is no longer being used for certain causes, it cannot immediately said to be death, provided its users are alive, it can be used another time. The unused or rather unspoken language at the time is appropriately said to be *sleeping*. Hoffmann (2009:12), who says *an endangered language is a language that is at the risk of losing all of its speakers*, goes further to give some causes of language endangerment as follows:

- a. Natural and man-made disasters resulting in mass death of a people
- b. Socio-cultural and economic assimilation and displacement of people a people
- c. The irresistible homogenization effect of dominant media language on the dominated languages

Following what has been said, with focus on these causes, and perhaps many others not mentioned here, every language can be said to be endangered, at least. This is because every language has suffered and will continue to be affected by some forms of conditions that will lead to its speakers' being death *en mass*. By implication both *sleeping language* and *endangered language* are relative phrases.

### **Related Terms to Sleeping Language**

A language is considered to be endangered if it is generally observed to be considerably and consistently tending towards extinction. Once dead, lost or disappeared forever, language extinction is said to occur. Alternatively, the gradual process that a language passes through from living to the point just before its death, it is called language endangerment. It is the actual death of language, when no one can use it or none of its users is alive, that is described as language extinction.

Hoffmann (2009:12ff) further reports on two related constructs – *moribund languages* and *safe languages* on the one hand, and *sleeping languages* on the other hand as given by Krauss (1992). Moribund languages are at the time not learned by children, and so will forever cease to exist, or be spoken within a generation (30 years). Although endangered languages are at the time being taught and learned by children within a century

(100 years), they will be no more. Safe languages are saved in the sense that they are at the time being learned by children, and so they are saved from extinction, at least for time being. Safe languages are neither moribund nor endangered. Sleeping languages can be awakened. By sleeping it means that the languages are neither extinct or death yet; they are only not spoken or written. If some part of the speaking population learns the languages from documentation, they can be effectively awakened, revived and elevated to global stage.

The minority languages are neither endangered nor extinct; they are more or less sleeping provided the surviving speaking population of the language concerned will produce adequate translated documents from English text for children or next generation to be adequately educated in it. Since the English language is rather the most dominant language for the globalization process, and which is to largely blame for both the sleeping and the endangerment of the Nigerian minority languages, the translation of texts in English into the Nigerian sleeping languages will certainly be an effective saving tool for the awakening, revival and survival of the affected Nigerian minority languages in the global scheme of things.

A text is a spoken or written discourse, identified for the purpose of analysis (Crystal, 1992:387). In translation, the interest is focused not on the rendering of form or structure of the text or discourse, but its meaning, which in most cases misrepresents the message. How the representation and misrepresentation of message are made in the process of transferring meaning is later shown in the discussion under equivalence.

From whatever angle it is viewed, the globalization process in the broad sense is to blame for the conditions of sleeping and endangered languages. It is evident that the three factors as retold above by Hoffmann to account for the general incidence of language disappearance, and by implication, are direct products of globalization. Although the globalized world today preaches inter-dependence of the independence states, the weaker states are actually compelled by the stronger states without reasonable resistance, if any, to accept the socio-cultural and economic models, values and practices of the stronger states. It is through this imbalance global interaction that many languages are already severely sleeping or endangered to the points of almost no hope of awakening, revival, and survival.

### **The Three Basic Issues in Translation**

The three basic issues (or developments) which have emerged to define the nature of translation are *invariance*, *equivalence* and *formal correspondence* (Morini, 2008:30). They are respectively developed by Oettinger (1959/60), Nida (1964) and Catford (1960). They are basic in the sense that by the time a detailed account of each is given, almost all the aspects of translation principles and practice would have been considered. As such, only the basic issues under each of the three basic issues will be considered. The objective is to help prompt the many growing Nigeria scholars, especially whose languages have been labelled as sleeping or endangered, start both academic and non-academic translation of texts in English into their sleeping minority languages. For convenience, *formal correspondence* will be adapted for *form*, with *invariance* and *equivalence* to be adopted

as they appear. Thus form refers to *language structure*, *invariance* means *language universal* and *equivalence* is *closeness in inter-language meaning*.

### Form

Form is normally identified and described in writing rather than speech of a language. Coincidentally, the translation being considered here is for written documentation. In English, form is an identified unit which can basically be described as a word or a group (or words). As a word, it is called a lexical form. The word *buy*, for example, is a lexical form of English. In turn, the words *buy* and *bought* are forms of the word *buy*. Lyons (1977:19) describes *buy* as a lexeme when considered to have forms like *buy*, *bought* and *buying*. Because the form *buy* has the same appearance as the lexeme *buy*, the lexeme is marked as an infinitive *to buy*. Also the form *bought* does not change its appearance (morphology or structure) whether it is used as a simple past (I bought a car), past participle (I have bought a car) or a complement (the car is bought). It leads to the distinction between *form* and *meaning* (Crystal 1992:141). Palmer (1997:34), begins by saying in linguistics... we draw a distinction between grammar (form) and semantics (the study of meaning) and insist that they are not identified; Palmer's emphasis is on syntactic rather than lexical forms since syntax is central to grammar. Form as a word or a lexical form may not necessarily change although its meaning changes according to how it is used in a (word) group or syntactic form. Alternatively, the meaning of a word in isolation may not be determined unless it is put to use in a social or syntactic context. The form refers to the word appearance and the meaning means the content (idea or object) the word represents.

As a group (of words), form is called syntactic form. This could be a phrase, clause, and sentence. For example, these are three syntactic forms, each written in a sentence:

Your name is Pang?  
Is your name Pang?  
Your name is Pang.

The first two are interrogative sentences. While the interrogative in the first is realized by the rising of the intonation pitch towards the end of the utterance, in the second it is realized essentially by the invasion of the verbal element *is* to become the first element as the theme in the sentence. The last sentence is marked by a full stop to make it a statement. Although it has the same syntactic form with the first interrogation, apart from the rising-pitch factor, the question mark sets it apart.

Admittedly, form is much more concerned with syntactic than lexical structure. The implications of all these for translating a text in English into a sleeping language are evident. Considering that the lexical and syntactic forms of sleeping or endangered languages have not yet been manipulatively expanded and equipped to express the complete global patterns of thought, the following basic issues under English forms should be considered during the translation.



- a. Form is the carrier of meaning. The two are always at variance with each other. Translators seek to identify the meaning in the source language and afterwards transfer same into the target language or form.
- b. How the source forms are arranged to make meaning is only a guide to the translator in transferring the meaning. However, very often following strictly the arrangement of forms in the source language when rendering alters the meaning the source text. Alternatively, where upholding the forms in the source (or original) text will distort its meaning, betraying the forms to uphold the meaning or rather message is recommended.
- c. The meaning of a form, being it lexical or syntactic cannot be determined independent of the other forms within a text before translating it.
- d. To adopt the term as used by Catford (1965), there is no *formal correspondence* between forms of a source and those of a target language. The form or structure of one language varies with other languages. For example, the English *thank you* is a syntactic form, but it can be translated into Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo as *Nagode*, *Ose* and *Emela* respectively, all in lexical forms. In many cases, the syntactic forms are each inverted before it is merged as one lexical form in the target language.
- e. As shown under lexical forms, translating meaning can be effected phonologically without altering the form of the target language.

### Invariance

Invariance means the same. Relating to language, it means in some aspects languages are the same, although not exactly. The collection of these considerable features that hold languages together is called *language universal*. If languages were totally different from one another, translation would have been extremely difficult. It actually the presence of the differences that makes translation interesting enough to be regarded as a field of study. In translation the concern is to exploit maximally the language universal, which is largely the factor that makes translation possible. This is supported by Nida and Waard (1986:43) as ... *there are a number of language universals which are significant in any and all inter-lingual communication*. They further itemize these language universals as personal narrative, didactic and epic poetry, proverbs, orator and lanais.

In addition, Fromkin and Rodman (1978:331) and Nida and Taber are confident to suggest that, although in different ways, all languages are capable of expressing any idea. The consideration that languages differ is a matter that cannot be resolved only when a form-based translation is pursuit. If the focus is meaning-based, translation no doubt becomes realizable. Thus the basic implications of invariance for translation are obvious also.

- a. Translation is made possible largely due to the language universal – features that hold languages together.
- b. Because all *living*, as opposed to *death* languages is dynamic, a sleeping language rules which can be manipulated, and its vocabulary expanded, to express any idea

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when the need arises. These attract the application of the principles of coinage and transliteration.

### Equivalence

Because equivalence is born out of the necessity to make translation possible in spite of the obvious language difference among languages, introduces the principle of philology is necessary. Perhaps equivalence begins with the argument that there cannot be a perfect or faithful translation owing to the language difference. As conveyed by Nida (1991:21-22):

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Europe the philological orientation in translating focused on the issue of “faithfulness,” usually bound closely to the history of interpretation of the text, something which was especially crucial in the case of Bible translations.

Being the first established principle, philology develops alongside the Bible interpretation and translation, the two constructs which require respectively intra-lingual and interlingual communications. It is for the fear of *adding* to or *subtracting* from the Bible text that the literal or direct translation as proposed in philology was applied to keep faith with the Bible text. However, worst unfaithfulness than ever before was recorded as the focus was not meaning-based, but form-based.

Both translators and translation scholars see the language differences as rather necessary. Since it cannot be avoided it is handled as challenges that require the translator to produce a target text that expresses the closest meaning to the source text. Some of the English forms that may serve to differentiate English from other languages are contractions, question tags, passive voices, intransitives, forms for colour variations, and block sentences.

It is chiefly the weakness of the meaning-alteration inherent in the principle of philology that prompts Nida to establish (functional) equivalence (Gutt, 1992:35). Today equivalence has been transformed into the principle of functionalism – a meaning-based translation to complement the principle of philology, which is form-based. It is the principle of functionalism that has provided the basis and support for developing and accepting the basic definition of translation as the transfer of meaning from the source into the target language. In turn, the basis for the development of equivalence is the inability to have an *equal* form from the target language to represent a given form from the source language. By this the basic implications of equivalence for translation are as follows:

- a. As invariance offers the possibility for translation, equivalence provides the opportunity for the choice of the equivalent form closest to an identified form in the source language. For example, “female”, ‘girl’, ‘lady’, ‘madam’, ‘spinster’, ‘woman’ and ‘mother’ are range of forms that will require a translator to carefully choose the equivalent for each for a target language. Where they are not found the task could become a very difficult one as many sleeping languages may not have contemplated creating an equivalent form for each of them. As a result, the search

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for the closest equivalent form may lead to choosing the poorest equivalent form. The same situation may arise when the following range of words is considered: ‘unhappy’, ‘angry’, ‘sad’, ‘furious’, ‘disgruntle’, ‘frustrated’, ‘dissatisfy’, and ‘annoy’ on the one hand and ‘happy’, ‘lucky’, ‘fortunate’, ‘prosperous’, ‘cheerful’, ‘content’, ‘delighted’, ‘elated’, and ‘exultant’ on the other hand. All this range of forms may have a slight degree of difference among them though they may be considered by a translator as the same in terms of meaning. The demand on translators is that they should be skillful in determining the synonym (the closest equivalent form in meaning to the form of the source language) according to how it functions in a social and grammatical context.

- b. While equivalence offers opportunity for the best choice to be made, it equally gives room for wrong decision to be taken, with perhaps the greater tendency to opting for the wrong choice of equivalent.

### **Conclusion**

*Form*, *invariance* and *equivalence* as discussed above represent language structure (or difference), language universal (or similarity) and language equivalence (closeness in meaning) respectively. They interplay to determine the meaning contained in a source language. As the meaning contained in the source language is being transferred into the target language, the same kind of interplay among the form, invariance and equivalence determines the meaning the meaning or rather message to be sent to the receptors in the target language.

However, the situation affecting a sleeping language is language of obscurity. Its forms have not yet been fully developed to vary with the English forms on the one hand, and have not yet identified its equivalent forms to that of English on the other hand. For effective translation into sleeping languages, the forms of the sleeping languages need to be developed first. Consideration of invariance and equivalence to the English forms will facilitate the development of the proper equivalent forms in the sleeping languages.

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## **14. Translation Endangerment: An Appraisal of Barriers**

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### **1. Introduction**

Barriers here refer to any obstacles (persons, actions or procedures) which hinder the smooth running of something or prevent the achievement of goals/objectives in an endeavour. Despite the fact that translation serves important functions to mankind, it does that only when a correct rendering is done. However, the correct rendering is not as easy as it sounds. That is why some linguists attribute impossibility to translation. Even those who maintain that translation is ever possible, still agree that it is a difficult task. As a result of the difficulty in translation, problems which prevent the attainment of closest natural equivalents (objective of translation) arise. In this paper, two basic problems affecting translation activities are discussed. One of the problems is related to the competence of the translator and the other is lack of equivalents.

### **2. Translator as a Barrier**

A translator becomes a technical barrier if he fails to secure technical qualities such as presented in Sarvi (2008, 2012 & 2013). The deficiencies which demote a translator to a level of technical barrier to effective translation are:

#### *2.1 Lack of linguistic competence*

A translator may be a root cause of problems affecting translation activities. Lack of all-round competence on the part of the translator will definitely affect the attainment of dynamic equivalents and provision of correct message in the receptor language. This competence is one of the basic qualities of an effective translator as discussed in Sarvi (2013). The competence is also related to the element of translation, as well as lack of awareness of the problems affecting translation. For example, if a translator has no linguistic competence in both or one of the source and receptor languages he will not be capable of producing an acceptable and relatively equivalent version in the receptor language. This is because he will not be in position to know many of the important terms and the circumstances of their usage in both languages. Moreover, he may not be aware of the natural equivalents of some lexical items and that of some statements, especially idiomatic and proverbial statements.

Therefore the best way a translator should solve this problem is by trying as much as possible to acquire linguistic competence in the two respective languages. In fact a translator needs more than ability to read, write and speak the two languages concerned, but should try to attain certain degree of expertise in them. This can be done by reading extensively of materials of varying disciplines and by conducting researches. He can



improve more by discussing with experienced and competent translators and linguists. He can also hold talks with experts in the field of study to which the text is related.

### 2.2 Lack of conversance with the cultures of the two languages

Another problem is lack of conversance with the culture of the languages speech community. No doubt, if a translator is not conversant with the culture of both or any of the source and receptor languages, problems arise in the translation procedure. This is because a translator will not be able to distinguish among the different social positions, taboos, mores etc and the appropriate lexical selection to be made in each situation. Moreover, if a translator has no knowledge about the cultural distinction between the two languages, he may end up using vulgar language, indecent statements, and other unconventional utterances which would either not represent the language or even cause disagreement by speakers of the language. For instance, whenever Hausa Islamic scholars, especially theologians, come to describe the excretory and sexual issues such as defecation and sexual intercourse, they prefer to use Arabic loan words directly such as *gayixi* and *jima'i*, or as the case may be, use Hausa euphemisms like *bayan gida/zagayawa* and *saduwa*, rather than using the typical Hausa words such as *kashi* and *ci* respectively. In some situations the native forms are considered vulgar. The fact that language is conventional makes it universal that these terms are avoided therefore a translator should avoid them in favour of conventional terms.

In essence, a translator is duty-bound to be conversant or improve his conversance in the cultures of the two respective languages. This could be done by studying the history, culture and literature of both the source and receptor languages. If possible, he should also have contact with the people in order to be well accustomed.

### 2.3 Lack of knowledge of the subject matter

Lack of technical knowledge on the subject matter is another problem of translating which is related to a translator. If a translator has no basic knowledge in the field of study from which the text is extracted, he will not be able to translate the text effectively. This is because words, in most cases, attain their meaning in relation to the text in which they appear. In other words, a single word may have various connotations depending on the subject matter or context. A text may be scientific, technological, religious, administrative, political or linguistic etc. for example the word *spoke* may be a simple past tense of the verb speak, as in *He spoke during the meeting*, (linguistic). Likewise the word may mean any of the bars which connect the outer ring of a wheel to the center as on a bicycle or motorcycle. This ability of a single word to have different meanings is referred to as homonymy. Therefore homonym is a word (written or spoken) which has two or more unrelated meanings. For instance, the word *kuuraa* has many unrelated meanings such as *hyena*, *cart*, *magnet* etc. in another example, the word *bat* has different meanings related to varying subject matter and (or) context. These include:

BAT- An animal/bird which has teeth and wings

BAT- A specially shaped wooden stick used for hitting the ball in table tennis.

BAT- To close and open the eyes quickly, sometimes as a sexual invitation  
BAT - A verb, as in, he bats the ball smartly.

So also the word *pupil* may be primary school child or part of an eye.

In short, *Homonyms are words which had quite separate meanings, but which have accidentally come to have the same form.* (Yule 2003:121).

The ability of a word to contain different meanings forces a translator to have basic knowledge in the topic and the context of situation in order to make a correct rendering. For that, a translator must be acquainted with the field of study to which the text relates. This can be done easily, if a translator specializes in a particular area and keeps the records of the technical terms usually used. By so doing, a translator will soon be acquainted with all the terms in the area and the different circumstances of their usage as well as their equivalents in the respective languages.

#### 2.4 Lack of endurance and perseverance

Lack of endurance and perseverance on the part of a translator consolidates the problems of inability to produce good and correct version of the receptor language, in which case a translator becomes a barrier to effective translation. Notwithstanding the significance of translation to mankind, it is considered to be a delicate and sensitive activity. It is a cross-cultural affair which can easily initiate crises among people or communities. It can lead to impersonation and adulteration or at least a swelling/decline of meaning, in each case of which the aim of translating is defeated. For that reason, a translator should not intentionally digress from the content of the original text. However, to avoid unintended digression and swelling of meaning, a translator should not make a hasty judgment on the content of the original version. He must find out and confirm the correct rendering into the receptor language. This may be done by comparing the responses of the source language receptors and those of the receptor language receptors. To undergo all these processes, a translator needs to endure and persevere for the ups and downs in the process of translation. An indolent translator will not achieve the objective of translating. Likewise, for the fact that languages are dynamic, if a translator is so hasty he may select a rendering which though may be correct grammatically, but is not intended by the author of the original version. This is because a sentence may be ambiguous and sometimes, none of the messages induced by the ambiguity is equivalent to that of source text. To an effective translator the best choice is the one which conforms to the content of the source language. For instance,

*Sun tattauna a kan jirgi.* This may mean different things which include:

- a. They discussed in a train/aeroplane/boat.
- b. They discussed about train/aeroplane/boat.

Examine the following examples:

1. Abu ta daxe da haihuwa.
2. Kunama ba ta da wuyar kisa.

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3. An taka ni a wurin taro.
  4. Sani ya soki Audu.
  5. Ya haxu da qwari
  6. An ba ta maganin haihuwa.

Each of the above sentences has more than one meaning, as follows.

- 1a. Abu was born a long time ago.
- 1b. Abu gave birth (to a baby child) a long time ago.
- 2a. Scorpion can easily kill (somebody/something).
- 2b. Easily can a scorpion be killed
- 2c. A scorpion can be killed easily.
- 3a. I was stepped on in a gathering
- 3b. I was cheated/my money was stolen in a gathering
- 3c. I was painted black in a gathering
- 4a. Sani stroke Audu (with a knife).
- 4b. Sani criticized Audu
- 5a. He met robbers
- 5b. He was robbed
- 5c. He met/saw insects.
- 5d. Insects disturbed him/destroyed his property.
- 6a. She was given drugs for birth control/prevention
- 6b. She was given drugs which can help her conceive.
- 6c. She was given drugs which can help her deliver easily.

Now by examining the above examples, one may agree that if a translator is so much in haste, he may either conceive the wrong meaning of the context, or render it into the receptor language in an ambiguous construction. Therefore a translator should not be so abrupt in making lexical, grammatical or semantic judgments. In other words, he must endure and persevere to read the text thoroughly in order to understand the real content of the message and make an accurate conveyance of the message into the receptor language through appropriate lexical selections and structural constructions. In short, the desire and indomitable effort of a translator to understand and convey the correct meaning, make him improves his all round qualities.

Translation recognizes the distinction among different languages. A translator should comply with such recognition. He is, therefore, compelled to consider the distinction between the source and receptor languages and translate accordingly. This will help him to translate correctly and without ambiguity. If a translator does not consider the elements, he may easily digress from the content of the original text. If that happens, a translator ends up in beating a dead horse. Not only that, there may be a social or even

legal conflict between the original author and a translator, or between the original author and the audience, etc.

### 2.5 Lack of professional training

Lack of professional or advanced training in the field of translation can make a translator incapable of making effective translation. Therefore a translator must acquire certain knowledge and skills in translation to make him more effective. When it comes to professional translation such as translating religious, scientific, philosophical, legal texts, etc. a good translator should have a skillful contact with the experts in the respective areas of study for technical know-what and know-how in the areas.

In a nutshell, if a translator has not attained the all round competence in relation to qualities of effective translator, a thorough knowledge on the elements of translation, and lacks special training in the field of translation, he will no doubt, lose on the wings what he gains on the roundabout.

### 3. Lack of Equivalents as Technical Barrier

The second and natural problem in translation is that which relates to translation procedure itself. This problem refers to lack of linguistic equivalents among different languages and cultures. Each language is only capable of providing a lexical term to represent a material or an action already in the culture. Whenever there is a material or an action in a culture of a source language, which is not in a receptor language, such a material or an action would not have a linguistic representation in the receptor language. This representation may be lexical or grammatical. In other words it may be related to terminology or statement (Literal or idiomatic).

A translator always strives hard in order to discover and sustain the closest natural equivalents between the source and receptor languages. Whenever this becomes impossible, then there is a problem. This problem is technically referred to as *Lack of Equivalence*, hence technical barrier.

As stated earlier, this linguistic problem (lack of equivalence) is eminent as a result of varying culture among languages. The evidence of this can be seen from the socio-geographical nature of each language environment. This is for the fact that many materials and actions which are evident in some areas may not be available in others. This type of materials and actions will not have linguistic representation in the languages of such areas. For example in English culture, there had been nothing to compare with the Hausa materials *fatala/kallabi*. Lack of this material in English culture denotes that there had not been a lexical term to represent it in the language. Likewise the English material *facing cap* or *helmet* had no cultural ground in Hausa. This made Hausa language crippled in the lexical representation of the materials. Moreover, modern science and technology nowadays has become part of English culture. Therefore most of the terms therein are not available in many African languages, Hausa inclusive. Definitely, this will bring problem to an English-Hausa translator.

If we turn to lack of equivalents of statements, especially idiomatic statements, the question is the same. Every language is unique pertaining to the rules and regulations

governing its combination of words to form a sentence. Sometimes a translator comes across certain statements in the source language text which do not have grammatical or semantic equivalents in the receptor language. For instance, *a grass widow* is an English idiom, which means, a woman who lives temporarily without a husband, as in:

*Talle is a grass widow for the past three months.*

This idiomatic statement may not have natural equivalent in Hausa. A translator should neither refer the word *bazawara* to the idiom for the meaning is quite different, nor should he refer the word *gwauruwa* to it, as it is contrary to the meaning of the idiom. In order to come out with the correct version in the receptor language, in other words, in order to solve the problems of lack of equivalence, certain techniques and strategies should be employed. This will be the bedrock of the subsequent discussion.

#### 4. Strategies for Solving Lack of Equivalence

Translation is an important cross cultural activity which assists in the all round development of mankind. For that reason, translation becomes a compulsory activity. Considering the significant roles played by translation, various strategies are employed to solve its problems of lack of equivalence. Among them include *circumlocution*, *Coinage* and *borrowing* which is divided into *complete adaptation* and *partial adaptation* (Sarvi 2008).

##### 4.1 Circumlocution

Circumlocution is the use of large number of words in the receptor language to express an idea which is rather in few words in the source language. For instance the word *fluorescent* means a long tube (substance) having the quality of giving out white light when electric or other waves pass through. In Hausa, people call it *kyandir*, which is wrong, because *kyandir* is a loanword for candle (wax). So also one should not translate the word as *qwai*, because *qwai* means many things different from fluorescent. It may mean egg, or lamp; and if one says *qwan lantarki*, this is *bulb*. Therefore the best way to translate the word fluorescent is by circumlocution i.e. translating its intra-lingual meaning as *dogon qwan lantarki*. In fact, many words need this strategy to be translated. Here, various examples are provided from different languages as follows:

| English      | Hausa                   | Tone pattern  |
|--------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Tricycle     | Babur mai tayoyi uku    | LH/L/HHH/HL   |
| Anthrax      | Ciwon saifa             | HL/HL         |
| Arthritis    | Qaban qashi             | HH/LH         |
| Gyanaecology | Ilimin cututtukan mata  | HLH/HHHL/HH   |
| Rinderpest   | Ciwon bushiya           | HL/HHH        |
| Treason      | Cin amanar qasa         | F/LHL/HH      |
| Plebiscite   | Quri'ar raba gardama    | LHL/LL/HHL    |
| Conference   | Taron qara wa juna sani | LH/HL/F/HH/HL |



| Hausa      | Tone Pattern | English           |
|------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Burtuntuna | LHLH         | Mould fungus      |
| Vara       | LH           | Hand decodication |
| Garke      | HL           | Cattle yard       |
| Garmazo    | HHH          | Wind erosion      |
| Bante      | LH           | Loin cloth        |
| Tsila      | HH           | Tape worm         |
| Kurkunu    | LHH          | Hook worm         |
| Rake       | LH           | Sugar cane        |

#### 4.2 Coinage

This is used interchangeably with the word neologism. Linguistically, coinage means an act of inventing new words or phrases. In translation, specifically the words coinage and neologism each, is that act of creating new terms or phrases to describe new terms or materials in the receptor language. Coinage is a very important tool for the survival and development of every language.

If a translator comes across an item or an action which is new to the receptor language, and therefore no word or phrase to describe it, he should resort to coinage. That is to say, he should manufacture, in the receptor language, a brand new term or phrase to represent such an item or an action. For instance, the phrase, *facing cap* or *helmet* had no equivalent in Hausa. However, a translator looks at the physical appearance of the material, its functions or any other quality or characteristic of the material, in order to create a suitable new term for it. Due to *facing cap* or *helmet*, Hausa translator looks at the physical appearance of the materials and therefore calls them *hana salla* and *hular kwano* respectively. This is for the fact that if one puts a facing cap, one could not put his forehead to the ground for complete prostration which is a compulsory condition for prayer and helmet is metallically composed. Therefore the ability of a translator to invent new terms or phrases in the receptor language can solve the problem of lack of equivalence. However, it is not advisable for a single translator to single handedly, create new words. This is because by so doing, we shall have as many new words as the number of translators on each item. This is for the fact that each person may have his peculiar conception of reality. And if the number of words created equates that of translators on a single item, we may say that the problem takes a new shape. Then, how can the problem be solved? A very strong committee, for creating new terms should be established. This committee should encompass many people of varying expertise, especially lecturers teaching linguistic courses in universities and colleges, those in the media, especially who get special training in language arts and mass communication. Experts of various fields of study should be inclusive in the committee. This type of effort emanated during the reign of Hans Vischer the Director of Education in the colonial era, a bureau, popularly known as *Translation Bureau* was set up in 1929. One of the functions of the bureau was to translate books from other languages to Hausa (Sarvi 2006). Another, attempt to that respect was made by the Northern House of Assembly who passed a motion for the setting up of *Hausa Language Board* (HLB) which featured in 1955. One of the functions

of the board was carrying out the Hausanization of grammatical phrases loaned from Arabic (Sarvi 2006). Another remarkable move of this kind was made at Bayero University Kano. The centre for the study of Nigerian languages BUK organized a National Summit for the Standardization of Hausa New Words from English Language. The summit was conducted from 10<sup>th</sup> –12<sup>th</sup> October, 2002. There and then a committee was established for the translation of various terms. The work of the committee covered various areas of study, and one thousand two hundred and thirty five (1,235) words were translated from English to Hausa. As a result, the book titled *Sababbin Kalmomin Ingilishi Zuwa Hausa. Littafi Na Xaya* was published in 2003.

The large number of the committee members will help in the easy and quick spread of the invented terms to the speakers of the language. On the contrary, if a term or a phrase is created by few members of the committee, there is likelihood that the term disappears on the way to language use circle. Likewise if a new term is created by non experts in the linguistic discipline, there is tendency that the term lacks some indispensable linguistic features. A word which is properly coined easily becomes familiar to the receptor language clients. In other words it will, no longer, or hardly, be traced as a coined word.

Here, basic criteria employed in manufacturing words are provided in Sarvi (2008) as follows:

*Functional:* In this case the function of the material or action is examined and a term is created accordingly, for instance.

|               |                         |               |              |
|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Sanction      | Takunkumi               | (LHLH)        | } Functional |
| United Nation | Majalisar Xinkin Duniya | (LLHL/HL/HHL) |              |
| Stroke        | Masokiya                | (HHLH)        |              |
| Library       | Xakin karatu            | (HL/LLH)      |              |
| Stadium       | Filin wasanni           | (HH/LLH)      |              |

*Physical:* Here the structure or physical appearance of the material or action in question is taken note of. This may include the shape, quantity or volume, colour, or make-up, e.g.:

|             |             |         |            |
|-------------|-------------|---------|------------|
| Space Craft | Kumbo       | (HL)    | } Physical |
| Trigger     | Kunama      | (LHL)   |            |
| Palm oil    | Manja       | (FH)    |            |
| Naira       | Qwandala    | (HHH)   |            |
| Roundabout  | Shataletale | (LHHHH) |            |

*Compositional:* This criterion discloses the examination of the basic component of the material. Sometimes the combination of the material, in multiple numbers, to form another thing is discovered and the coinage follows either of the lines, e.g.:

|                    |                         |                |                 |
|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Biological weapons | Makamai masu guba       | (LLH/LH/HL)    | } Compositional |
| Oral re-hydration  | Ruwan gishiri da sukari | (HH/HHH/L/HLH) |                 |
| Lexicon            | Rumbun Kalmomi          | (LH/HHH)       |                 |
| Basket Ball        | Qwallon Kwando          | (HH/LH)        |                 |
| Fifty Naira        | Wazobiya                | (LHLH)         |                 |

*Operational:* Here the focus is on how the material or situation is manipulated to function, e.g.:

|                 |                      |              |               |
|-----------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Missiles        | Makamai masu linzami | (LLH/LH/LHL) | } Operational |
| Key             | Makulli/mabuxi       | (HHH/HHH)    |               |
| Suicide bombing | Qunar baqin wake     | (HH/HH/HH)   |               |
| Drama           | Wasan kwaikwayo      | (LH/HHH)     |               |

*Ideological:* In this case, the principle idea of the concept is considered in coining its equivalent term or phrase, e.g.:

|              |                |           |               |
|--------------|----------------|-----------|---------------|
| Conservatism | Ra'ayin riqau  | (HLH/LH)  | } Ideological |
| Terrorism    | Ta'addanci     | (HHHL)    |               |
| Capitalism   | Jari hujja     | (HK/HL)   |               |
| Fanaticism   | Ga ni kashe ni | (LH/LH/H) |               |

#### 4.3 Borrowing

Borrowing technically refers to the taking of words from one language to another. It is a general phenomenon among all human languages. It is also an aspect of language contact. These words (which are taken from one language to another) are technically called *Loan Words*. It usually signifies that the culture of the *Model* (Language borrowing) has no such a material or action represented by the word being borrowed otherwise there must be another reason for borrowing, such as the effect of bilingualism, negligence, superiority or inferiority feeling etc.

In a nut shell, borrowing is another way of expanding the vocabulary of any language that borrows. According to Armstrong (2005) borrowing is one of the ways in which a language renews its lexicon.

Just like coinage, linguistic borrowing has its own peculiar problem. The basic problem here is that the word is left un-translated. Therefore those who cannot read *Donor* language (Source Language) can hardly read it in the model language. So also, whoever does not understand it (spoken) in the donor language will not understand it in the borrowing context. Therefore, the significance of borrowing is by assimilation. Any word which is borrowed from the donor to the model must be fully indigenized before the receptors begin to understand its contextual and semantic appearance. This is done by frequent use of the loan words in everyday affairs by those who are already familiar with them. Linguistic borrowing is divided into two adaptations. That is complete Adaptation and partial adaptation (Sarvi 2008).

### 4.3.1 Complete Adaptation

This is the process by which words are borrowed directly from the Donor/source language to the model/receptor language. It is here referred to as complete adaptation, as the free morphemes are left without any adjustment. In other words, the words are borrowed completely. The spelling and the pronunciation appears to be the same between the donor and the model. Consider how speakers of English aggressively borrow words such as *kindergarten* from German; *croissant* from French; *alcohol* from Hawaiian and *sushi* from Japanese, among many others. According to Harnish (2001) languages even borrow words that were themselves borrowed. The Aztech language contributed many words to Spanish which have now become part of English. The following Aztech words are known to most English speakers living in the United States: avocado, cocoa, chocolate, coyate, enchilada and guacamole. Others include guava, macho, maize, mesquite, mexico, and ocelat, and more such as saquaro, taco, tamale, tequila, and tomato etc. Harnish further asserts that the English speakers living in Southern part of the United States are familiar with some Aztech words such as, cholla, horchata, ocotillo pozale, javalina and metate. Others include mezeal, mole, pulque, quetzal and tecate etc. in fact this borrowing is a natural propensity among languages in contact all over the world. Examine the following examples:

#### English to Hausa

*Gas*: A form of matter characterized by unconstrained movement of the atoms and molecules (Levey 1993)

*Sandal*: a Light shoe made of flat bottom and bonds to hold it on the foot (Procter 1984)

*Gasket*: a flat piece of soft material which is placed between two surfaces so that steam, oil or gas, etc., cannot escape (Procter, 1984)

| Arabic   | Hausa    | Tone Pattern | Glossary    |
|----------|----------|--------------|-------------|
| Muhawara | Muhawara | LHHL         | Debate      |
| Rumman   | Rumman   | LH           | Pomegranade |
| Shari'a  | Shari'a  | LHL          | Law         |

| Fulfulde | Hausa  | Tone Pattern | Glossary |
|----------|--------|--------------|----------|
| Nagge    | Nagge  | HL           | Cow      |
| Jante    | Jante  |              | Fever    |
| Gwaggo   | Gwaggo |              | Aunt     |

| Hausa | Tone Pattern | Gwandara | Glossary   |
|-------|--------------|----------|------------|
| Doki  | HL           | Doki     | Horse      |
| Bante | LH           | Bante    | Loin cloth |
| Goro  | HL           | Goro     | Kolanut    |

| <b>Tamadjack</b> | <b>Hausa</b> | <b>Tone Pattern</b> | <b>Glossary</b>         |
|------------------|--------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Akala            | Akala        | HLH                 | Leading rope of a camel |
| Kanwa            | Kanwa        | HH                  | Potash                  |
| Cibi             | Cibi         | HH                  | Spoon                   |

#### 4.3.2 Partial Adaptation

Partial adaptation is the most common aspect of borrowing. It is an act of borrowing words with some phonological adjustments. Here words are borrowed in such a way that they suit the spelling and pronunciation system of the model language. Each language has its own independent phonological system. Therefore by partial adaptation, the model language receptors could pronounce the borrowed words, though that is not a ground for understanding their meaning. The greatest portion of Hausa loaned words from other languages are borrowed on this basis. Hausa language does not borrow any word which is in consonant cluster system without changing it to suit the Hausa abutting consonant system. That is to say, whenever there are two or more consonants at the beginning or end of a word. Hausa language either deletes one or two of them or inserts a vowel between them.

In essence, words borrowed from other languages to Hausa under partial adaptation, are phonologically adjusted to conform to the Hausa sound system. Moreover, words that contain sounds which are not available in Hausa are replaced with other sounds which are relevant to Hausa. Indeed, this phonological adjustment is applicable to any language borrowing from other languages. Examine the following examples:

| <b>English</b> | <b>Hausa</b> | <b>Tone Pattern</b> |
|----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Wheel          | Wili         | HL                  |
| Driver         | Direba       | HHL                 |
| Screw-driver   | Sukundireba  | LLLHL               |

| <b>Arabic</b> | <b>Hausa</b> | <b>Tone Pattern</b> | <b>Glossary</b> |
|---------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Al-wudu       | Alwalla      | LLH                 | Ablution        |
| Khasarah      | Asara        | LHL                 | Loss            |
| Marhabah      | Maraba       | HLH                 | Welcome         |

| <b>Hausa</b> | <b>Tone Pattern</b> | <b>Migili</b> | <b>Glossary</b> |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Buhu         | LH                  | Bufu          | Sack            |
| Kilaki       | HHL                 | Cilaci        | Prostitute      |
| Keke         | LL                  | Cice          | Bicycle         |

| <b>French</b> | <b>Hausa</b> | <b>Tone Pattern</b> | <b>Glossary</b>  |
|---------------|--------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Savon         | Sabulu       | LHL                 | Soap             |
| Tahunner      | Tahuna       | LHL                 | Grinding machine |



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| Arabic    | English   |
|-----------|-----------|
| Asdurlab  | Astrolobe |
| Algorithm | Logarithm |
| Alchemy   | Chemistry |

## 5. Conclusion

The paper contains discussion on the technical barriers endangering translation. Problems related to translator and those related to the translation procedure are appraised and how to overcome them suggested. A translator should be aware of the problems and try his best to overcome them in order to save or at least revitalize translation activity from endangerment or total extinction, if I may crown it all.

Translators should be professionally trained on the theory and practice of translation otherwise they plan to fail by failing to plan.

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## **15. Harnessing Linguistic Resources for Effective Translation: A Way of Preserving the Status of a Language**

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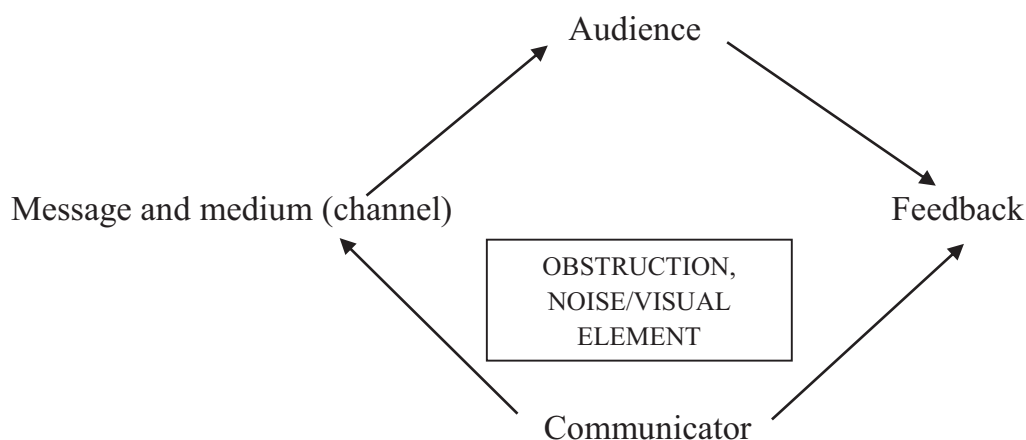
### **0. Introduction**

Language is fundamentally an auditory system of symbols and the tool for significant expression used in human society for purposes of communication. The factor of meaning as a decisive criterion in determining whether a sound or a form has functional significance or not, must be kept in mind in every communication. This is because meaning is what gives language its usefulness; at the same time. If an utterance whether written or spoken bears no meaning, it has no significance and it is no language and cannot be used in communication. Linguistically, “sound” as used here refers to speech while “form” refers to writing, both of which play crucial roles in communication. Communication is a process of sending and receiving messages and includes all the ways through which we can let other people know and share our thoughts, feelings, experience, and knowledge. For communication to be effective, the communicators (i.e. the sender and receiver) must have to use a language or a set of symbols which both of them mutually understand.

Harris (1979), cited in Utuk (1995:1), refers to this as “a common frame of reference”, and without this mutual intelligibility, communication cannot take place. Communication can be said to have taken place when a message is sent, received and understood by the interacting parties. Most of the times the sender determines whether a message has been received or not via some kind of feedback from the intended receiver of the message. That is to say that communication is a two-way action, and that is why Warner (1974:166 reviewed in Utuk 1995) observes thus: “The listener makes an active contribution to what he hears and understands, and it is this contribution which makes the problem of comprehension both difficult and interesting”. Following the foregoing argument, Lyons (1981:34), emphasizes the need for a message to be fully communicated and to produce an intended result, as he says: “Successful communication depends not only upon the receiver’s reception of the signal... but also upon *his recognition of the sender’s communicative* intention and upon his making an appropriate behavioral or cognitive response to it.”

Language and communication always go hand-in-hand and communication must be transacted in a well-designed system to be effective. That is why Lyons (1981:32), says, “Indeed, it is difficult to imagine any satisfactory definition of the term ‘language’ that did not in corporate some references to the motion of communication.”

The diagram below (a communication model) illustrates the relationship between language and communication and the expected feedback from the receiver to the sender.

Fig.1 *Communication Process*

(cf. Engel p. 5)

From the communication model above, it can be observed that the sender of the message was given some kind of feedback and this feedback enables the sender of the message to evaluate his intelligibility. Sometime, the meaning of the message in the communication process is not understood and this is caused by a number of factors called noise. Noise is anything which obstructs the transmission of or reception of a message in a communication process. Incompetence in the use of language by the speaker or writer creates semantic problems in understanding and translating of his message. Finally poor hearing or reading by the translator also results in mistranslation of sounds and also visual elements that distract attention constitute noise and hamper translation. The role of linguistics in translation is informed by the fact that every aspect of human language robs off one on the other, hence the need for inter-lingual communication, which is one of the functions of translation.

### 1.1 The Interface between Language and Translation.

Language is as old as mankind. Hence studies in ethno-linguistics, reveal that the language of a race always has a contemporary origin with that race of people (Essien 1990:1). The evolution of language brought about the need for interaction, cooperation, agreement and at times disagreement among human beings.

The connections of language, translation and linguistics are based on the probability of contact and interaction between human beings. It is obvious that when man came into existence he began to communicate with his immediate neighbors, and the immediate environment. Translation needs arose as the turn of events of life brought man into contact with his distant neighbors of different linguistic backgrounds and this is so as to bring about interaction between people of different backgrounds. Initially, they had to learn each other's language. When they understood each other's language they were able to translate the languages in contact which they understood to those who did not understand. This appears to be the plausible way to trace the origin of translation or interpretation. At this

insipient stage of linguistic operation, only oral utterances are considered. This is because the spoken language predates the written form. Hence, it should be noted that, interaction across languages at the early stage was mostly in the spoken form through interpretation and translation was mostly restricted to written utterances. It is necessary also to point out that these two linguistic exercises namely; interpretation and translation are often used interchangeably since spoken language was in existence before the written form.

### **1.1.1 Linguistics and Translation Interface**

Linguistics is the scientific study of language. Lyons (1979:1) defines, linguistics as “the scientific study of language” and the term scientific study of language, *means* “... investigation by means of controlled and empirically verifiable observations with reference to some general theory of language structure.”

Every language has its grammar comprising the syntactic, the phonological, and the semantic components. To this effect, Chomsky (1965:16) says:

The phonological component of grammar determines the phonetic form of a sentence generated by the syntactic ruler that is, it related as structure generate by the syntactic component to a phonetically represented signed. The semantic component determines the semantic interpretation of a structure generated by the syntactic component to a certain semantic representation.

This structural organization of language can be conveniently handled in a written form, not orally, and this written form is translation. Catford (1961:1) says translation is a process of substituting “a text in one language for a text in another”. But it is from the structure of the language that we grasp the full meaning of the utterance in that language. Accuracy in translation is dependent upon the translator’s ability to read and understand the original text through the structure of the language.

Although both linguistics and translation are related in a way to writing, yet without mastering the structure of the languages concerned, the translator cannot achieve accuracy in his/her translation. The structure of language falls within the domain of linguistics which points to the fact that linguistics came before translation. And has a role to play accurate translation.

From evidences in the discussions above, we can deduce that immediately following the appearance of man on earth was the twin birth of language and communication, closely followed by interpretations, while linguistics was developed later and forms the basis for accurate translation.

### **1.1.2 Pre-requisites for Translation**

Every language is made of words. Therefore, the history of language might also imply the history of the word that make them up, hence the raw materials for translation are words, and the translator must be conversant with these raw materials and how they combine in syntagmatic relations.

### **1.1.3 Languages in Contact and the Need for Translation**

Languages in contact necessitated the need for translation. The history of migration, conquest, colonization, trade, education, information dissemination, etc., among people of various/diverse linguistics backgrounds necessitated communication across boundaries. For instance, the contact between English and Igbo and in fact many of the indigenous languages was as a result of colonization and the contact has left an indelible impression upon the language.

Both English and Igbo have their varieties called dialects. As an Indo-European language, English has a history of its existence till date. English is believed to have its origin from West Germanic. With the Norman conquest of 1066 AD by Williams the Conqueror, came the admixture of Indo-European languages, preeminent among which were German, French, Scottish, Gaelic, Irish, Welsh and English. English has many varieties which include Standard English and it is believed that speakers of the Standard English have consciousness of superiority (Strang 1977:160). Speakers whose speeches deviates from Standard English to a considerable level are said to be speakers of a dialect, Brook (1958 in Utuk 1995:14) notes: "It is well to remember that Standard English is itself a dialect which has acquired greater importance than the other English dialects for reasons which are, in the main, non-linguistic".

The variety of English which has become Standard English is the indigenous London speech - Cockney - the antecedent of Received Pronunciation (Strang 1977 reviewed in Utuk 1995:10). Comparatively, Igbo has its standard orthography, the Onwu Orthography developed in 1963 and the first grammar of Igbo was written by Green and Igwe in 1965. Though the language has been in existence with the Igbo people before writing, Igbo language is an Igboid belonging to the branch of Benue-Congo known as the West Benue-Congo, which was formerly known as the Eastern Kwa under Greenberg's classification. As of necessity, we shall cite some examples of translations from Igbo.

## **1.2 The Levels of Linguistics Explained**

As some of the roles of linguistics in translation are being underscored; it becomes expedient to define linguistics alongside the levels of linguistics to enable us explore their functions in translation. Linguists are in agreement that linguistics is a scientific study of language (Lyons 1979:1, and Crystal, 1974:10). The study of linguistics is tied up with a linguistic theory, which in the words of Sommerstein, (1977:13), "... is regarded as a set of universal conditions which all grammars of possible human languages must obey". The linguist is therefore obliged to acquaint himself with the greater possible number of languages in order to determine what is universal in them by observing and comparing them. This will enable the linguist to do accurate translation.

### **1.2.1 Phonology**

This is the study of the sound system of a language. Sommerstein (1977:1) and Yul-Ifode (1996:5-6) agree that "phonology is often said to be concerned with organization of speech sounds within specific languages", unlike phonetics which is concerned with the study of speech sounds in general. Phonology is concerned with the sound patterns of individual



languages. Its concern is with the ways in which the sounds and prosodic features defined by phonetics are actually used in natural languages. Phonology is mostly a code whereby the grammatical structures known as sentences are given audible form and morphemes explicated in the lexicon. It provides the principles for determining the pronunciation, meaning, syntactic properties, and the morphological properties of the words, phrases and sentences of a language. Tone and intonation are features of phonology and they help in making meaning clear.

According to Uldall (1979:324) “it is clear that some kind of meaning is conveyed by the intonation of language and non-tone-languages. This portrays the enabling role which linguistics, with phonetics and phonology as its components, can play in translation. As every language has its different phonologies, knowledge of the phonology of the interacting languages places the translator at a better pedestal for his job.

### **1.2.2 Syntax**

Syntax: has to do with word-order of the language. Syntax is the totality of the grammar of any language. Every language has its own word-order which could be SVO, OVS, OSV, etc. The language could be head-initial or head-final word order language. A good translator would exploit this linguistic issue in his translation to give a well-constructed grammar of the languages in question.

### **1.2.3 Semantics**

Lyons (1990:156) states that semantics: “... is the study of meaning... According to what has long been the most widely accepted theory of semantics, meaning are ideas or concepts which can be transferred from the mind of the speaker to the mind of the hearer by embodying them, as it were, in the forms of one language or another.” Semantics is crucial in translation. The mastery of meaning in both the source language and the target language guarantees accurate translation from one language to another, while on the other hand, ignorant of it makes for distorted translation. It is not easy to establish a one-to-one equivalent of meaning of a particular utterance or word when translating from one language to another. For this reason, Lyons (1979:405), opines that “The ideal language... would be one in which each form had only one meaning and meaning was associated with only one form. But this “ideal” is probably not realized by any natural language, well, it may not be easy to come by this idea.”

Changes do occur in words and pose semantic problems. This is a linguistic factor which leads to the assignment of many meanings to a single word. That is, certain words have semantic domains as pointed out by Nida and Taber (1974:69), say, “Generic terms cover many specific terms which give us an important clue to the existence of semantic domains, i.e., broad categories of things within a given culture.”

In order to analyze and bring out the related meanings of a single word, Nida and Taber (1974:76), say that “It is necessary for us to look at the “internal” semantic structure of the different meaning of single words and do identify those semantic components which define the differences between them.”

Semantics, as an academic discipline, is a controversial one just as meaning itself is, and for this reason a translator has to be conversant with the various shades of meaning - the figurative and the non-figurative (literal) shades of meaning in order to translate effectively. This is why unless we know the literal and the figurative meanings of the word 'TORTOISE', then it will be difficult to interpret the sentence, "This boy is a tortoise". The figurative use of language represents an exploitation of the non-figurative.

Semantics is a very important aspect of language because without meaning language itself becomes useless. Hence Nida (1982:134) states: "the words of any language always encompass the entire semantic space of a people's experience". There is no gain-saying the fact that the knowledge of linguistics with its components of phonetics/phonology, morphology, syntax and more especially semantics places a translator on better pedestal for the job of translation. All the levels of linguistics have one form of role or the other to play in translation.

## **2. False Assumptions about Translation**

There are many assumptions surrounding this discipline of translation. These assumptions arise from the fact that people seem to experience no difficulty in working out the meaning of most of the utterances that they hear". (Garnham 1985 reviewed in Ukut 1995:17). The following misconceptions/assumptions have been going on about translation.

- a. Because man is endowed with the natural faculty and facility for acquiring and using language, little or no thought is taken about the complexity of the human language. It appears that the common presence of both language and communication with man has made most people think that linguistic interactions, even across cultures are an easy task. Translation is thus assumed to be a simple job, in fact an 'all-comers' job; without requisite training.
- b. The preferential status accorded English, where English in Nigerian has become the language of government, business and commerce, education, mass media, etc, and "the language of internal communication among Nigerians of different language backgrounds and of course, the language of international communication" (Ikara 1986:33), as such anybody with a smattering knowledge of English will feel he/she has enough knowledge to embark on translation or interpretation of utterances from, English into the native/indigenous language or vice versa. Once a person knows a few words of English language, the assumption by non-linguists is that the person is a bilingual. Bilingualism goes beyond knowing just a few words of the target or source language in order to be able to translate or interpret effectively.
- c. There is an assumption that no training at all is required in translation or interpretation where the two languages are involved. A close look at the involvements of translation would require that training in linguistics before one can translate accurately is needed.

- d. Lack of awareness in the discipline of translation. People regard some amateur language learners as bilinguals and therefore accept any translation information they produce, no matter how badly done, as translation.
- e. There is an assumption that there is no need for the aesthetics of linguistic stylistics in translation as long, as the message is delivered across linguistic boundaries in other words; there is no need to encourage accuracy translation or interpretation. This is of course against what the pre-requisites of translation present.

## **2.1 Translation Processes and Functions**

Translation is an off shoot of languages in contact. Translation takes place when a message is transferred from one language to another. Various and diverse definitions have been proffered to this concept translation. Some view it as an art, some as a science, as a discipline in the humanities. In this paper translation is viewed as it relates to languages in contact- as means of bridging communication gaps when languages come into contacts.

According to Foster (1958:1), translation is: “the transference of the content of a text from one language into another”. To Nida and Taber (1974:2008), translation is: “The reproduction in a receptor language of the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning, and second in terms of style.” Adeniran (1984:156) says what is involved in translation is the reducing of “a text in one language, called the source language into another called the target language”, and adding: “... translation is the case of bilingual performance in the written medium and usually benefits from facilities such as time and materials, for example, the use of the dictionary and other references”.

Lyons (1981:238) says that translation is “a process of determining the meaning of the information given in one language and assigning equivalent meaning of the information in another language”. While Rabin (1958:123) states that: “Translation is a process by which a spoken or written utterance takes place in one language which is intended and presumed to convey the same meaning as a previously existing utterance in another language.” This definition includes both speech and writing.

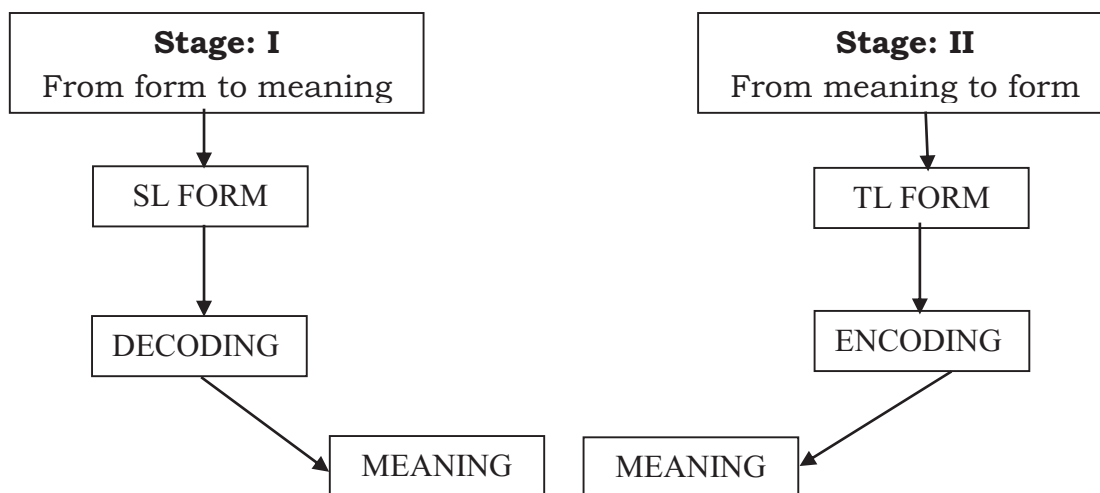
Reenan (1974:195) provides a natural mode for translation from one language into another. “For two sentences of different languages to be exact translations of each other, they must be semantically related to other sentences of their respective languages in exactly the same ways.” Catford (1965:1) sees translation as: “an operation performed on languages: a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another”.

Pointing to the role sentences play in translation, Catford (1965:35) reveals that “It is generally agreed that meaning is important in translation. Indeed translation has often been defined with reference to meaning; a translation is said to have the same meaning in the original.”

The translation is faced with the task of accounting for two languages, both the source and the receptor/target languages and as such the translator must be grounded in the nuances of both languages. The translator must take into account the various principles that are operative in the receptor/target language as well as those principles that guided or constrained the authors as “true translating produces the closest natural equivalent first in

meaning and secondly in style” (Nida 1986:217). We can represent the process that goes on between the source language (SL) and target language (TL) in translation in a translation model.

**Fig.2** *Stages of Translation* (cf. Utuk 1995:4)



The two stages of translation as demonstrated above involves the decoding of the message from the form of the source language (SL), followed by the encoding of the meaning of that message in the form of target language (TL).

## 2.2 Differences between Translation and Interpretation

Interpretation is closely related to translation in meaning and often used interchanging with translation. It is however, necessary to provide a linguistic analysis of the word to see where its similarities with and differences from translation lies. In the words of Adeniran (1984:158), “Interpretation is bilingual performance in the oral medium and must be pretty difficult as its operation involves rather quick decoding between source language and target language and must therefore require greater skill and high degree of bilingualism”. But interpretation does not operate exclusively in the “Oral medium”. It includes the written medium, what characterizes interpretation is the use of words.

## 3. Conclusion and Recommendation

We have worked at the definitions of both linguistic and translation and from both definitions; we can discover that both linguistics and translation have to do with language. We can also discover that translation and linguistics deal with inter-lingual communications which are all in the domain of linguistics.

Looking at bilingualism and languages in contact which give room for translation, we can see that both are linguistic issues and both make in-route into translation, making it more effective rather than hampering it.

In the same vein, from the definitions of phonetics and phonology and their functions, it is evident that whatever utterances made begin with sounds which are the

domain of phonetics and phonology, both of which are components of linguistics. In interpretation, the oral forms (utterances) are treated while in translation, the written words are treated. All exploit linguistic effects to work effectively.

In any utterance or translation passage, one cannot do without meaning, the concept of meaning is a linguistic issue, and no effective translation could be done unless the actual meaning of an utterance as encoded by the speaker could be decoded effectively by the hearer or the translator as the case may be. Decoding or giving the shades of meanings that are contained in utterances or words is a linguistic issue.

Syntax of course is the embodiment of the utterance in a graphological form and any form that is deviant cannot be meaningful. The proper graphological arrangement of grammatical items is a linguistic matter and a correct word-order is needed to be able to make meaning out of utterances and invariably make a good translation.

No wonder you see a lot of distorted and incorrect translations on bill boards, television screens nowadays days. A personal observation of some subtitles on televisions of some home videos, especially where some English texts are subtitled in Igbo or vice versa, leaves a lot to be desired and it shows non-professionalism in the job of translation. For instances, the writer have observed some sentences of Igbo which are structurally and wrongly constructed in some home videos and songs played on some Christian television channels, which show a lot of mistranslations. Examples abound from Igbo to English:

|                          |     |                                 |                                                    |
|--------------------------|-----|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| *Imela                   | for | I mèèlà                         |                                                    |
|                          |     | You do (perf)                   |                                                    |
|                          |     | ‘You have done well/thank you’  | ‘Thanks / Thank you’.                              |
| *Ibiala                  |     | I biala?                        |                                                    |
| *Unabiala                | -   | Únù ábiàlà                      | You (pl) are welcome                               |
| *Onyedinma               | -   | Ónyé dị mmá                     | ‘the good one’                                     |
| *Onyedinso               | -   | Ónyé dị nsọ                     | ‘the holy one’                                     |
| *Onyekereuwa             | -   | Ónyé kèrè ùwà.                  | ‘The creator (of the earth)’                       |
| *Onyedikagi?             | -   | Ónyé dị ka gị?                  | ‘Who is like / who is to be compared with/to you?’ |
| *Onyeneme nma-           | -   | Ónyé ná-émé mmá.                | ‘The doer of / the benevolent one’.                |
| *Onyenagworia-           | -   | Ónyé na-ágwọ ọrìà               |                                                    |
| *Chidinma                | -   | Chidìmma                        | ‘(proper name) God is good’                        |
| *N’abia/nabia            | -   | Ná-àbjà                         | ‘is coming’                                        |
| *Ndewonu                 | -   | Ndèēwó nú                       | ‘greeting /salutation’                             |
| *Ó jí ọkpá bià           |     | *He came with his foot.         | Instead of ‘he came on foot’.                      |
| *Ọ n̄rụ m̄mírí.          |     | *He drank water;                | instead of he drank some water.                    |
| *O riri nri              |     | *He ate food                    | instead of he ate some food.                       |
| *Imarnma                 | -   | I mara mma                      | ‘You are good/ beautiful’.                         |
|                          |     | (You beaty pst good complement) |                                                    |
| *A ga m aturu gi nma nma |     |                                 | Will (fut) me praise) you praise                   |
| A ga m aturu gi mma mma  |     |                                 | ‘I will give you praise’                           |



The phrases marked with asterisk are just a few examples of some of the mistranslations/misspellings done by non-linguists in attempting to translate from Igbo to English. Sentences in the first column are out of the order of Igbo sentence structure/word-order, but, many people who write subtitles for music and home video go ahead doing it anyhow, in fact, with impunity. Because they have little knowledge of Igbo and English, they think they can translate from English to Igbo. This brings us to the issue of professionalism in translation and the knowledge of linguistics for enhancing translation. If the translator in the first column had knowledge of linguistics, he would have of course have known the word order of Igbo. Translation should not be an all-comers affair. Professionalism should be encouraged. In fact, there is a difference between a translation done by a linguist and the one done by a non-linguist, because the linguist will bring to bear on the translation all his knowledge of linguistics on the translational exercise. This will make for an accurate and effective job.

We want to conclude by saying that looking at what linguistics and its components and their roles are, one would say that the role of linguistics is crucial to translation and at the same time recommend that anyone engaging in professional translation should have a good knowledge of linguistics. Also those who have been doing it as a means of living that do not have knowledge of linguistics should seek professional advice from linguists as regards to the sentences structure/word- order of the languages involved. They also need to be guided in the areas of shades of meaning in order to provide an accurate meaning for any piece of translation. The role of linguistics in translation can never be overemphasized. No translation can be done without the influence of the levels and components of linguistics. The role of linguistics in translation and communication cannot be overemphasized. Effective communication is enhanced with accurate translation which in turn is indispensable in preserving the quality of language.

### **3.1 Recommendations**

Advocacy for the recognition of translators, availing them of training opportunities and better pay, should be given an urgent consideration. Making recommendation for streamlining the requirements for professional translators, including studies in linguistics as mandatory and the imposition of penalties for intentional mistranslations and ‘practitioners’ indulging in haphazard jobs should identified and sanctioned. A good translational exercise observing the roles of grammatical constructions should be encouraged for preserving the structure and status of any language.

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## **16. Translating Technical Texts: The Igbo Language Example**

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Translating a text from one language to another poses problems to the translator. The task becomes more enormous when translating from a well-developed language to one in the process of developing. It even becomes more complex when dealing with a technical text. Every domain of translation presents its own difficulties, the technical domain inclusive. Technical translation belongs to a specialized area. This implies that it involves specialized terminology. The Igbo language is poor in the development of technical terms. There is a wide gap between English and Igbo both linguistically and culturally. The paper tries to identify some challenges in translating a technical text into Igbo and suggests the way forward.

**Key words:** *translation, technical terms, specialized translation, tonal language*

### **0. Introduction**

Translation generally involves a range of difficulties and this can be a very challenging activity. The problem is even more accentuated when dealing with technical translation. Technical translation belongs to a specialized field. It implies then that it requires specialized terminology. Specialized translation has its peculiar problems no matter the language. The situation becomes more critical and complex when translating from a widely accepted and developed language. The English language is far more advanced than the Igbo language in all ramifications. The two do not belong to same family and as such do not share much in common. There is a wide gap between the two. While the English language is well advanced in scientific and technical terminologies, the Igbo language is in the process of developing terms to bridge the gap. Buttressing this point, Eke and Ugorji (1999:26) note that

Many factors account for this variance: levels of scientific development, levels of cultural evolution, etc. it is true that Igbo man has come in contact with the computer, yet, since it is not in our culture, it is difficult for the translator to find on the spot equivalents to suit the English terms for parts of the computer.

Every language has a particular way of expressing things. And this is often influenced by the environment and culture, which in turn determine their choice of words. In other words, the lexical resources of a language reflect the environment in which its native speakers live. Bellos (2011:160) opines that, “*languages tend to have words their users need, and not to have words for things never used or encountered*”. In this era of globalization, there is need to disseminate information concerning scientific researches and knowledge to the public through the media and different reading materials. The

Igbo race should not be left out in the fast changing world. Hence the need for translation of vital types of knowledge into Igbo. This will no doubt go a long way in the development of the Igbo language. We have chosen a technical text that is multidisciplinary culled from Osita Eze's book, *Nigeria and the World Trade Organization*. We shall look at the concept of translation, technical translation. To better appreciate the challenges encountered in translating the text, we shall do a brief comparison of the two languages. Finally, a commentary will be done based on the translated text before we draw a conclusion.

## 1. Method of Data Collection

The idea of this paper was informed by the fact that the Igbo language is poor in technical terms. There is need to create technical terms in Igbo to cope with the fast changing world instead of resorting to direct borrowing from other languages. The major method of data collection was discussion with experts in the legal profession, especially in international law. We equally consulted other research works done in the field of technical translation.

### 1.1 Data Presentation

There two tables: I and II. Table I has two columns. The first column is for the English version of the text, while the second is for the translated text in Igbo. Table has four columns. The first has the serial numbers. The second is for the specialized terms arranged alphabetically. While the third column has the Igbo translation, the fourth indicates the technique used in term creation.

## 2. Techniques in term creation

There are different techniques of term creation proposed by different Igbo scholars. The methods include naturalization, compounding, acronym, adaptation, sigla, coining, hybridization, creative equivalence etc. According to Sager (1990:65), terms can equally be created by analogy. We will present the techniques and examples encountered in our work.

### *Borrowing*

This involves lifting a word from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL) when the equivalent does not exist in TL. All languages borrow from one another, the Igbo language is no exception, e.g. *HIV*.

### *Naturalization*

In naturalization, words are borrowed but modified either phonologically or orthographically to reflect the lexicon of the receptor language, e.g. *Treaty*= *tiriti*.

### *Composition*

This is the combination two words to create a new one, for example: *AIDS*= *Qria* + *mminwu* (noun +adjective)



*Description*

This technique is used when there is no equivalent of the term in the target language. The example taken from our work is *TRIPS = Otu ahĩa mba ụwa maka ihe gbasara inwe okwu n'ahĩa*.

*Coinage*

This involves using some letters to form a new word. It is mostly used in the creation of abbreviation and acronyms, e.g.: *Qria mminwu = OMI*.

### 3. State of Technical Terms in the Igbo Language

Few researches have been made for promoting the level of technical terms in Igbo. Okeke (2006) published a trilingual study of expanded national programme on immunization terminology in English, French and Igbo. Obasi and Ohaike (2011) carried out a bilingual study of HIV/AIDS terms in English and Igbo. Uhuegbu and Ijioma provided culture-bound legal terms in Igbo. The work done so far is not enough and research is still on going.

### 4. Conceptual Framework

Since the paper is on translation of technical texts, we are faced with the task of looking at translation and technical translation with its characteristics and problems.

#### 4.1 Translation

Many linguists have defined translation in various ways depending on their school of thought. Simply put, translation is the transfer of message from one language to another. When we talk of language, it cannot be isolated from the social context in which it is embedded. Hence Vermeer (1989:222) observes that, "language is part of culture". Translation goes beyond the transfer of message from one language to another which is purely a linguistic affair. Translation should be seen as both linguistic and cultural activity. According to House (2009:11), "Translation is not only a linguistic act, it is also a cultural one, an act of communication across culture. Translating always involves both language and culture simply because the two cannot be really separated".

Based on the above definition, a translator should not only have sufficient knowledge of the source and target languages, but should also be conversant with both cultures. The target culture norms are crucial because it is the cultural environment that the translator will have to achieve its purpose. Hence translation is a form of intercultural communication. There are two major types of translation, the literary and technical translation. In this work, we are concerned with the technical translation.

#### 4.2 Technical translation

Technical translation is one part of specialized translation (Newmark, 1988:151). The specialized areas include politics, commerce, law, technology, medicine, finance, etc. According to [www.technicaltranslation.info](http://www.technicaltranslation.info), "Technical translation covers everything from automotive translations like car manual and instructions for machine maintenance, to scientific documentaries for the chemical and medical industries". It is generally distinguished from other forms of translation by its terminology. Every language has both language for general purposes (LGP) and language for special purposes (LSP).

And specialized vocabulary is an important feature of an LSP. In other words, LSP is the language of specialized subject field (Bowker and Pearsonn, 2002:27). This implies that technical translation is so varied in topic and often diverse in register. Each domain has its own particular terms and jargons. Wikipedia buttressing this point opines that

Technical terminology evolves due to the need for experts in a field to communicate with precision and brevity, but after has the (usually) undesired effect of excluding those who are unfamiliar with the particular specialized language of the group.

#### 4.2.1 Problems of technical translation

Like any other domain of translation, technical text has its own challenges. The number of technical fields is indefinitely large and terminology is expanding and changing daily. This results in some difficulties a translator may encounter in the course of his job.

##### *Problem of false friends (faux amis)*

These are words in one language that look like words in another but have different meanings. Some examples are cited below:

| English          | French              |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Density          | la masse spécifique |
| Specific gravity | la densité          |
| Petrol           | l'essence           |
| Kerosene         | petrole, etc.       |

A translator should not assume that he already knows a word. The use of reference books is imperative if in doubt.

##### *Neologisms*

Lack of knowledge of technical terms and neologisms constitutes a great problem for the translator. New coinages evolve daily especially in this era of information technology and scientific discoveries. Some abbreviations mean different things in different domains and languages. Baker (1996:25) observes that “Once a word or an expression is borrowed into a language, we cannot predict or control its development or the additional meanings it might or might not take”.

##### *Abbreviations*

Technical fields abound in abbreviations and acronyms. An abbreviation is not often translated by another. Most abbreviations mean different things in different languages, and even in the same language. Technical translation usually involves a lot of abbreviations and acronyms which are different in every language and these cannot be translated literally. For example, the abbreviation *LOC* in sports could mean *Local Organizing Committee* and *Loss of Consciousness* in medical domain (Ijioma, 2014). Also, the abbreviation *SR* could mean *Stimulus Response*, *Sinus Rhythm*, *Sedimentation Rate* or *Slow Release* (Ijioma, 2009:105).

## 5. Differences between English and the Igbo languages

A translator needs to have a good command of his working languages. That is why we are giving a brief comparison of English and the Igbo languages. As already mentioned, the two belong to different language families and do not share much in common. Stressing the importance of knowing differences between languages, Baker (1996:296) opines that “Translators should find it useful to investigate and compare the expression of such categories and meanings associated with various structures in their source and target languages”.

Below are some differences between the two languages.

### 5.1 The Alphabets

While the English language has twenty-four letters in its alphabet, Standard Igbo has thirty-six.

#### English

A B C D E F G H I J K L  
M N O P Q R S T U V W  
X Y Z

#### Igbo

a b c h d e f g gb gh gw h i j k  
kp kw l m n n nw ny o o p r s sh  
t u u v w y z

### 5.2 Specific Lexical Items Vs. Description

The English language in most cases is specific in the choice of words for name certain phenomena; the Igbo language, in many instances, names a phenomena through description. In most cases, a sentence is used to describe a concept. Some examples are as follows:

| <i>English</i> | <i>Igbo</i>                     | <i>Literal meaning</i>               |
|----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| A virgin       | Nwanyi n'amaghi nwoke           | A woman who does not know a man      |
| Idiot          | Onye nzuzu                      | A person of foolishness              |
| Herbalist      | Dibia mgborogwu na nkpa akwukwo | Doctor of roots and leaves collector |
| Arrivals       | Ndi nabata abata                | Those who are coming back            |

### 5.3 Articles

The English language has definite and indefinite articles, whereas such articles do not exist in the Igbo language.

Examples:    A man                      nwoke  
                  A goat                        ewu  
                  The house                    ulo  
                  The pot                        ite, etc.

### 5.4 Tones

Igbo is a tonal language, while English lays emphasis on stress. The tones determine the meaning of a word. Here are some examples.

|                |      |
|----------------|------|
| An egg         | Ákwá |
| A bed          | Ákwà |
| Cloth          | Ákwà |
| Cry            | Ákwá |
| Head           | Ísí  |
| Blindness      | Ìsì  |
| Cassava foofoo | Akpu |
| Cyst           | Ákpú |
| To dig         | Ígwú |
| Lice           | Ígwú |

### 5.5 Centrifugal system

The Igbo language operates a centrifugal syntax, while the English language operates a centripetal. This means that the qualifiers and determiners come quite often after the noun.

Examples:

|                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| A <u>big</u> house   | ụlọ <u>ukwu</u>       |
| <u>That tall</u> man | nwoke <u>ukwu ahụ</u> |
| <u>Some</u> people   | Ndi <u>ụfọdụ</u>      |
| <u>That</u> place    | Ebe <u>ahụ</u>        |
| <u>Kind</u> man      | Nwoke <u>obioma</u>   |

The underlined words are the qualifiers and determiners in both languages.

### 5.6 Generic language

Igbo is a generic language, most times, it has one word for related concepts but with different nuances. English on the other hand has specific terms for each concept.

Examples:

|           |     |
|-----------|-----|
| Law       | Iwu |
| Decree    | Iwu |
| Act       | Iwu |
| Ordinance | Iwu |
| Order     | Iwu |

Uhuegbu and Ijioma (2010:67) observe that, “the Igbo linguistic community makes little or no distinction between the different forms of legislation as found in the English language”. This in itself poses its own translation problems.

### 5.7 Verbs and adverbials

In English, verbs and adverbs stand apart in sentences, while in the Igbo language, the verb at times is an amalgam of various morphemes. Here is a typical example culled from Eke and Ugorji (1999:70):

|          |   |                                    |
|----------|---|------------------------------------|
| English: |   | S/he has already finished eating.  |
| Igbo:    |   | O richaalarii                      |
| O        | = | S/he (subject of the structure)    |
| ri       | = | eat (verb root)                    |
| cha      | = | all (finish... adverbial morpheme) |
| a        | = | imperative marker                  |
| rii      | = | already, since (adverbial).        |

It can be seen that “has already eaten” four words, has been rendered in Igbo by using a single orthographic word. From this, we can deduce that a language has generally established traditional combinations which do not occur with corresponding ones in another language. This comparison is very important for a translator to enable him know the nitty gritty of the language which in effect will help him do a good translation.

### 5.8 Repetition

The Igbo language, at times has a way of repeating words for emphasis. Bellos (2011:7) notes that, “... there are significant differences between cultures and languages and how people do things with words”.

Examples:

|                               |                             |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| It is <u>watery</u> .         | Ọ di <u>mmiri mmiri</u> .   |
| She wears a <u>red</u> dress. | Ọ yi afe <u>uhie uhie</u> . |
| She speaks <u>fast</u> .      | Ọ na-ekwu <u>oso oso</u> .  |
| Read it <u>slowly</u> .       | Gua ya <u>nwayo nwayo</u> . |

The underlined words in Igbo are equivalents of the ones underlined in English.

**Table I:** *The English and Translated Igbo texts*

| English text                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Igbo Text                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Members of the WTO recognize the gravity of the public health problems affecting many developing countries especially those resulting from HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other epidemics. Somehow, they see WTO agreement on TRIPS to be part of the wider national and international action to address these problems. | Ndi otu ahia mba uwa (WTO) kwenyere n'oke nsogbu nke ahụ ike ọha n'eze n'emetuta obodo ndi n'emepe emepe, karịsịa ọria ndi ana enweta site na ọria nje mminwu (HIV) n'oria mminwu, (AIDS), ukwaranta, iba n'oria ndi n'efefe. N'otu uzọ, ha n'ahukwa nkwekọrita otu ahia mba uwa maka ihe gbasara n'inwe ọnyị okwu n'ahia (TRIPS) ka uzọ aga eji weta nsogbu ndia na njedebe n'obodo anyi na mba uwa nile. |
| In what appears to be an affirmation of a high margin of appreciation which a state has, even in matters of treaty law, to protect its vital national                                                                                                                                                                         | N'ihe gbasara nkwardo n'oke mmasi ndi obodo nwere n'ihe gbasara iwu tiriti ichekwaba ọdimma                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |



|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>interest which is not necessarily limited to matters of health, it stated:</p> <p><i>“We agree that TRIPS Agreement does not and should not prevent members from taking measures to protect public health. Accordingly, while reiterating our commitment to the TRIPS Agreement, we affirm that the Agreement can and should be interpreted and implemented in a manner supportive of WTO member’s rights to protect public and, in particular, to promote access to medicines for all”.</i></p> <p>(Culled from Nigeria and the World Trade Organization by Osita, C. Eze)</p> | <p>obodo n’ihe ndi ọzọ ,’abughị sọsọ n’ihe gbasara ahụ ike kwugidere ike si:</p> <p><i>“Anyi kwere na nkwekọrita ihe gbasara n’inwe ọnụ okwu n’ahia (TRIPS) agahi egbochi m’ọbụ gbochie ndi otu a ime ihe ha nwere ike ime iji chekwaba ahụ ike ọha n’eze. N’otu aka ahụ k’anyi n’akwusike n’akwado nkwekọrita nke ihe gbasara n’inwe ọnụ okwu n’ahia. Anyi n’akwusike n’akwado nkwekọrita ahụ kwesiri ma nwere ike k’akwawa ya, meputakwaazi ihe n’uzọ g’akwadosike atumatụ otu ahia mba uwa n’ihe gbasara ichekwaba ahụ ike ọha n’eze, ya na ikwanite ọnọdụ nke g’eme ka mmadu nile wee ike n’enweta ogwu”.</i></p> <p><b>(Our Translation)</b></p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## 6. Commentary and problems encountered

There are remarked differences in both the English and translated Igbo texts. This is due to their structural and lexical differences. The lexical resources of a language reflect the environment in which its native speakers live

### 6.1 Length

The translated text in Igbo is longer than the English version. This could be explained since we earlier noted the sentential, descriptive and repetitive conceptualization and representation of Igbo concepts.

### 5.2 Multidisciplinary text

Translating a technical text in one domain poses a great challenge in the area of terminology documentation. The problem becomes worse when two or more domains are involved in one technical text. The translator is faced with the problem of terminology documentation. The selected text deals with commerce, health and legal terminologies. Each domain has its own peculiar terms and jargons. A word in one domain may mean different thing in another domain.

### 5.3 Abbreviations and acronyms

Abbreviations and acronyms abound in technical texts. We encountered some in our translation from the text.

**Table II**

| S/N | Technical Terms | Igbo Translation                                        | Technique Used               |
|-----|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1.  | AIDS            | Ọria mmịnwu/OMI                                         | Composition and coinage      |
| 2.  | HIV             | Ọria nje HIV                                            | Composition and borrowing    |
| 3.  | Treaty          | Iwu tiriiti                                             | Borrowing and Naturalization |
| 4.  | TRIPS           | Otu ahia mba uwa maka ihe gbasara inwe ọnụ okwu n’ahia. | Descriptive                  |
| 5.  | WTO             | Otu mba ahia ụwa                                        | Descriptive                  |

From the above examples, we can see that none of the words are translated with a word; the last has as much as thirteen words. The English language being a global and developed language has standard translations for these abbreviations. Translation of abbreviations and acronyms consists of reformulation from one language to another. In reformulation, the order of words can be changed after translation and new ones made to form a new name. Some may be completely different and have nothing in common in different languages. In one language, there are combinations of words that form abbreviations, while in another, the words are translated like several separate words. The Igbo language, on the other hand, is not developed in this area. The language is in the process of developing to meet up with the fast growing trend. We have translated the abbreviations and acronyms retaining the English versions in some cases, since the Igbo language has no equivalents for them. In the case of AIDS, we have tried to form an acronym: *Oría mminwú* (OMI). While retaining the English abbreviations, we should try to create our own. Language evolves and is not static. This will lead to the development of our own language.

#### 5.4 Borrowing

Borrowing is one of the techniques of translation. This happens as a result of contact between languages. Or, where a language lacks words to fill the gap, it also resorts to borrowing. There are many reasons for borrowing. Borrowing may be direct borrowing or there may be phonological or orthographical modification to suit the lexicon of the receptor language. Bellos (2011:179) on borrowing observes that, “They might import the word as it stand, making whatever modifications in form that are needed to allow it to function in a sentence”. An example from the translated text is shown below:

|            |            |
|------------|------------|
| Treaty law | iwu tiriti |
|------------|------------|

The Igbo language has no word for treaty. We have therefore borrowed the English word and modified it phonologically and orthographically to suit the Igbo language lexicon.

#### 6. Conclusion

Translation of a technical text into Igbo is a herculean task. The Igbo language because of the low level of its technological and scientific development lacks terms for some concepts. As a result, most terms are not lexicalized. Baker (1996:21) puts it thus, that “The source language word may express a concept which is known in the target culture but simply not lexicalized, that is not ‘allocated’ a target language word to express it”. This explains why some terms in English are translated into Igbo by description. It has equally been observed that the syntactic structure of a language imposes restrictions on the way messages may be organized in that language. That is why the product of a translation will be a disaster if the translator does not have sufficient knowledge of both the source and target languages. It is also imperative for a translator to be abreast of the trend, by keeping in touch with the modern sources of information. Any language that is not ready to generate terms and new coinages will die. The Igbo linguists in collaboration with translators and terminologists should work together to do more on the development of technical terms to meet up with the fast changing world.

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## Website

[www.technical translation.con.info](http://www.technicaltranslation.con.info)

## **17. The Igbo Language before, during, and after the Biafra War (1500 to Present) in Nigerian: The Igbo Question**

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Language, an irreducible fulcrum, upon which any nation revolves, is invaluable in the discussion of any socio-political situation in any nation the world over, and the Igbo nation is not an exception. In Nigeria, there exist gaps in the knowledge concerning the status of the Igbo language before, during, and after the Biafra War in Nigeria. While some researchers (Ward 1929, Achebe 1971, Afigbo 1975, Isichei 1973, Oraka 1983, Nwadike 2002, Ikeokwu 2010, Okwudishu 2010, Ugwuona 2013) have made and continue to make substantial progress on this front, current information is still incomplete. In this study, therefore, we help to expand the understanding of the current status of the Igbo language before, during and after the Biafra War in Nigeria. The persistent challenges in the Nigerian federation as well as the predicament of the Igbo nation in the federation since the amalgamation of Nigeria, 1914, also calls for urgent need for Igbo linguists and intelligentsia to address the issue. This paper therefore examines the status of the language at these various levels to see how it affects the socio-political development in Nigeria, especially the Igbo nation. The work, which is basically expository, draws data from various researches on the Igbo language study as well as the speakers of the three major Nigerian languages using descriptive method of analysis to deal with the data. From the study, it is glaring that the entire Igbo nation should retrace their steps and embrace their identity through their God-given language as a means of overcoming the challenges they face both in Nigeria and in the Diaspora. In this way, her language status as well as her citizens can live a life of dignity, and co-exist peacefully with her neighbours. This study is a step in the direction of evaluating the status of the Igbo language in Nigeria before the Biafra war till date and suggests ways of arresting the threats and challenges that loom over the language.

### **1. Background of the Igbo Language**

Igbo, as a language, is as old as the Igbo people. The Igbo language is primarily indigenous to the Igbo people and is one of the three major languages in Nigeria. The Igbo people occupy the Southeastern part of Nigeria. They are found predominantly in states such as Enugu, Imo, Abia, Anambra and Ebonyi States. They are also found in parts of Rivers, Delta and Akwa-Ibom, States. Currently, the Igbo are found globally. Various estimates have been presented on the number of languages in Nigeria. These range from 250 to 500 (see Ikekeonwu 2009, Emenanjo 2003, and Ugwuona 2013). The current population of Nigeria is put at about 140 million people (the 2006 census).

The Igbo language belongs to the new Benue Congo language family. Greenberg (1970) classified it in the kwa group along with other clusters such as Akan, Gbe, Yoruba, Igala, Nupe-Ebira Edo and Idoma. Native speakers are estimated to be

between 25-40 million people and 150 million people the world. That implies that 150 million people are potential speakers of the language globally. The Igbo language seems to manifest the greatest dialect diversity many of which vary in inherent intelligibility. It is probably due to this fragmentation of the Igbo people and their language that brought about the Igbo language internal conflict, where the dialects vie for ascendancy due to political, economic or socio-economic reasons. The Igbo language fragmentation is captured properly by Uwalaka (2001) when she asserts that practically, every village was independent, and so great was the isolation of each small community that the inhabitants of each neighbouring village speak in entirely different dialect. The above statement suggests that even before the coming of the colonial masters, as well as the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914 by Sir Fredrick Lord Lugard, the dialect consciousness with its concomitant political, and socio-economic motives were already there.

## **2. The Origin of the Igbo People**

In terms of the origin of the Igbo people, there have been several conjectures and reconstructions of the origin of the Igbo language. The most wide spread is the hermitic theory of the Israel; (Jewish) origin. Many of the Igbo people accept the Israel hypothesis, such as:

- the Eri migration
- the ancient *Obu* (remains of ancient house) Gad, the seventh son of Jacob at Agleri
- archaeological evidence
- glaring similarities between the Igbo tradition, custom and the Israelis.
- shared characteristic of the Igbo and the Israelis.

Ikekeonwu (2013) argues that the hermitic theory is more wide spread largely because of the shared characteristics of the Igbo and Israelis in the sense that both races are known to be very intelligent, industrious, and highly creative and imbued with an irrepressible search for knowledge. They have also been seen in histories to be amongst the persecuted she added. To support her view Ikekeonwu cites Professor Chinedu Nebo in the Ahiajoku lecture (2010) as he profiles the Igbo as follows:

The Igbo are resourceful, intelligent, industrious, sociable and hospitable. They are bold, courageous, proud and self sufficient. They have an indomitable spirit and will, a strong republican orientation balanced by time-worn democratic and egalitarian values that predate most of other civilizations. The Igbo are creative, gregarious, accommodating and tolerant of other nationalities. They are irrepressive travelers with an adventurous spirit driven by boundless optimism about the future. That is the real Igbo character known and admired and, at the same time loathed and envied by others.

There are other claims of the origins of the Igbo people such as, to Igala people to the Northern part of Igboland, Ibibio, Ogoja, and Ekoyi peoples to the Southeast of



Igboland, Ijaw people to the South West, and Bini to the West. In contrast, a few modern historians especially Isechei (1973), Nwadike (2002) and the archaeological findings at Igbo Ukwu and some other places do establish that the belt formed by Awka, Orlu, Okigwe and Owerri is known as the core or nuclear Igboland. From there, started a migration to the South and to East. However, the archaeological findings and excavations at Igbo Ukwu, Afikpo, the 4500 years old pottery uncovered at the University of Nigeria Nsukka, and a rock shelter at Ibagwa in Nsukka area which yielded both ancient pottery and tools of stone, all point to the fact that Igbo people as well as their language is autochthonous. In addition Isichei (1973), a great historian also testifies to the above fact and quotes one of her informants, an elder man from Mbaise as saying “we did not come from anywhere and any one who tells you we come from anywhere is a liar. Write it down”.

The decline of the autochthonous language of the Igbo people seem to have started with the attitude of the Igbo people towards their language, the arrival of the colonial masters, the 1914 amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria, and the subsequent Biafra war (Okwudishu 2010). Babajide (2001) captured this faulty amalgamation thus:

The political phenomenon called Nigeria came into existence in 1914 as a result of amalgamation of the southern and northern protectorates of the British territory around the River Niger area. The name Nigeria is said to be morphologically derived from a blend of Niger and area. Lord Lugard, the then colonial administrator considered this merger necessary for ease of administration. Thitherto, different and separate autonomous kingdoms had existed.

The above assertion suggests that Nigeria is an artificial structure initiated by foreign colonial master Lord Fredrick Lugard, who had neglected to consider the religious, linguistic and ethnic differences of the peoples involved. Uwalaka (2001) posits that the worst conflict involving the Igbo language is the conflict arising from contact with foreign languages. Nigeria like many other African countries passed through a colonial regime. The result is that the language of the foreign imperial power, i.e. English, got itself implanted as a language of wider communication; and the Igbo language seem to be most affected in this regard as we shall see in the latter sections of this present study. In their study of Language conflict in Nigeria: the perspective of linguistic minorities, Igboanusi and Ohia (2001) compared local languages, Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, and English to ascertain the most commonly used language in the home. They identified that 5.3%, 3.6%, 6.1% of the respondents commonly used Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa- in that order in day- to-day communication. 19.3% employed their local languages while 65.7% of the respondents communicated commonly in English language in the home. The assertion above suggests that out of the three major Nigerian languages (Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba), the Igbo language is the least commonly used language in the home, thus the attitude of speakers to the Igbo language especially the indigenous speakers tend to be negative.



### **3. Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research method, using questionnaire to collect data relating to the status, institution support, and population of users in Nigeria to ascertain the present state of the Igbo language as well as the attitude of Igbo nation to their language at present. For the purpose of the investigation, Nigerian nation was divided into three major languages (Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba) areas of The choice of these languages is informed by the fact that they are largely the representatives of the Nigerian language in Nigeria. Subjects for the study comprised 300 respondents, male and female on equal number of 150 each, with 100 drawn from each of the language group. They included professionals such as teachers, drivers, travelers, civil servants, business men and women between the ages of 18 to 65 years. We used simple frequency counts and percentages for the analyses.

#### **3.1 The Igbo language before, during and after the Biafra War in Nigeria**

In this section, I discuss the state of the Igbo language under three broad periods: the Igbo language before the Biafra war, that is, the Isuama period 1500-1900, the Union Igbo period 1900-1929, the central Igbo period and the great Igbo orthography controversy (1929-1962). This will be followed by the Igbo language during the Biafra war (1967-1970), and lastly, the Igbo language after the Biafra war to date (1970 to present).

#### **3.2 The Igbo Language before the Biafra War (1500 to 1967).**

The Igbo language is as old as the Igbo people. ‘The earliest and special form of writing of the Igbo people and their neighbouring groups (Cross River) was Nsibidi’ (Nwadike 2002:13). He also observes that the Igbo evolved sign writings like the Egyptians and the Sumerians through which they preserved and transmitted information. This suggests that accounts and records were kept through the means of signs on the walls and floors of houses, the trunks of live trees, and some other convenient places. This type of script was greatly used by many Igbo communities of the south-east and their Ibibio neighbours of the present Cross River and Akwa Ibom States. Nsibidi according to Nwadike served various function such as identity label, public notice, private warning, declaration of taboos, amorous dealings, reckoning of taboos in the localities where it operated. This form of writing, described as formalized pictographs – (Nsibidi) was popular among secret cults (among the Cross River peoples, Aro) in the pre-1599s (Okwudishu 2010).

Nsibidi was also said to have been used extensively in recording proceedings in the court. It died a natural death probably because of its limited use. It was not until 1904 that its existence was learnt by T.D. Maxwell a European, the then acting district commission in Calabar. Oraka (1983) noted that apart from Nsibidi writing, the Igbo people acculturated themselves effectively by formal methods. It is clear that at this time, the Igbo language has not been committed into writing.

#### **3.3 The Isuama Dialect (1700 to 1900)**

Isuama dialect was used in Igbo studies in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest attempt to commit Igbo to writing was done via the Isuama dialect. This dialect was not universally spoken in the whole of Igbo nation then. It was the dialect spoken by the

Igbo ex-slaves who were resettled in Sierra Leone. The dialect was later adopted for literary works both in Freetown and Onitsha. Considering the history of the ex-slaves who were resettled in Sierra Leone, it was glaring that their spoken Igbo can be captured as a pidgin Igbo. Asuama was a sort of an Esperanto which the different dialect groups of the Igbo ex-slaves used for the purpose of mutual intelligibility. Regardless, Ajayi Crowther of the church missionary society (CMS) Niger mission who with his men established a mission at Onitsha adopted it for their evangelical work. In effect, Crowther was assisted by Schon, a linguist who from his base in London had worked on Igbo for some years and had produced a grammar of the Igbo language in 1875: *Oku Ibo*, grammatical elements of the Ibo language. In 1875 at a conference Crowther and his translator were summoned to resolve that:

The standard and reading dialect is strictly to be that of Isuama, it being the one which all other dialects will learn to speak, while the Isuama will yield to no other one, hence, translations in this dialect will be universally received by the nation (Hair 1967: 94 as cited by Uwalaka 2001). As expected, a good number of the variety of the Igbo language will be ignored following this trend.

The adoption of the Isuama dialect as the standard Igbo for the Igbo nation then provoked different reactions from different people of Igbo nation and the subsequent failure. Part of the reason for this is that the Isuama dialect was altogether foreign in Igbo nation and not universally spoken across the whole Igbo land. The other reason (Ugwuona 2004:56) relates to the over democratic and indomitable spirit of the Igbo people. In 1882, Crowther wrote vocabulary of the Ibo language, the first comprehensive dictionary in Igbo. In 1883 Crowther and Schon jointly revised it and added more words. They eventually came up with vocabulary of the Ibo language part II, English - Ibo dictionary. By this time, Igbo had some 50 books and booklets published in it (Oraka 1983). In 1885, Roman catholic mission (RCM) reached Igboland but did not seem to be interested in the study of the Igbo language. In 1891, Bishop Crowther died and the Isuama Igbo period died with him. However, a lot of works on Igbo studies were achieved during the Isuama period (see Oraka 1983, Nwadike 2002, Emenanjo 1975, Achebe 1971 and 1972, and Okwudishu 2010 for details). Regardless, by the late 1880s, the Isuama experiment had died a natural death.

### **3.4 The Union Igbo Period 1900 to 1929**

Union Igbo was intended to be the brand of Igbo which every Igbo man would understand and speak. In other words, it ushered in the development of an Igbo version aimed at merging or writing at least five major dialects of the Igbo language (Arochukwu, Bonny, Uwana, Onitsha and Owerri) that would be a central or compromise language, playing the role of a literary medium for the Igbo people. The most important and popular work published in union Igbo was the Holy Bible. Other solid work during this period include materials on Igbo culture proverbs, folktales, riddles and custom, translation works, anthropological report of the Igbo speaking people of Nigeria, revision and enlargement of existing Igbo grammar books, among

others. In spite of all these achievements listed above, union Igbo has some criticism as we can see from the assertion of Achebe (1971): Union Igbo is a heavy footed and clumsy Esperanto. Continuing, he notes that the inability of the Union Igbo to cope with drama and poetry rules it out decisively as a language of creative literature.

Ward (1941) also reorganizes the short comings of the Union Igbo thus:

- It makes use of some few constructions which are used in a very limited area. His reason being that the perfect suffixes *-wo* as in *woro* were recorded only in Afikpo and Okana and used by two of the informants at Awgu.
- It makes too frequent use of the participles *we* (a very meaning take, used in a few dialects, e.g. Onitsha, to continue a narrative but not to begin it). This is the form used for the Bible and *introducing* a sentence.
- Union Igbo has made use of somewhat restricted range of grammatical forms; this must have tended to exclude the variety of constructions and idiomatic expressions that make Igbo a lively and Vigorous language. The above problems imply that the Union Igbo has not settled the dialect problem of the Igbo people.

### **3.5 The Central Dialect and the Great Orthography Dispute 1929 to 1962**

This period overlapped with the orthography period with the failure of union Igbo to satisfy the purpose for which it was structured, the search for a viable dialect to be adopted in the production of Igbo literature continues. Consequently, ward in 1941 looked for a dialect of Igbo which would be accepted over a considerable area of the Igbo nation, and which might form the basis of a growing standard Igbo. Ward then selected what came to be known as the central dialect; that is, the dialect of the central area of the Igbo people in contradiction to that of the Onitsha area. The dialects are those spoken in old Owerri province. Ward asserts that some of the Northern dialects including Nsukka, Eke, Udi as well as a number of borderline dialects show more affinity with the central dialects variation than with Onitsha dialect. Uwalaka (2001) believes that Wards approach to the Igbo language internal conflicts resolution appeared to be a realistic one, given that no artificial creation of standard dialect was involved.

The discussion of the development of Igbo before the Biafra war in Nigeria cannot be complete without a look at the issues of orthography controversy between 1929 and 1961. It is almost the worst aspect of the dialect/or orthography controversy in Igbo nation. The early work on the Igbo language was done with the Lepsius orthography in 1854. It was this orthography that Crowther and the entire C.M.S mission adopted. In 1922, the Phelp-Stokes, an American philanthropic organization whose main interest was the education of the black peoples issued a report known as the Phelps-Stokes. This report contained a strong recommendation that the African child should be educated in his mother tongue. In 1926 the education ordinance/code was enacted, requiring that only the vernacular or English be medium of instruction. In June of the same year, the International Institute of African languages and cultures (IIALC) was launched. Its first publication "The Practical Orthography of African Languages appeared in 1927. This orthography was a radical departure from the Lepsius alphabets used by CMS. The replacement of the Lepsius orthography with the

IIALC orthography adopted and renamed Adams ward orthography in the eastern Nigeria was not accepted by the CMS conservatives. This sparked off a controversy with the government. The Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) and the Methodist on one side, and the CMS (Anglican) conservatives on the other side (Okwudishu 2010). In effect, an advisory committee that included representatives from the missions agreed to set up a translation Bureau at Umuahia in 1930. In 1933, Omenuko by Pita Nwana was published after winning an all-Africa literacy contest in indigenous African language organized by international institute of African languages and culture. The first edition was in the protestant orthography, but it was soon issued in the other orthographies. Longman Nigeria published an “Official Orthography Edition” translated by J.O. Iroaganachi between 1939 and 1944, a combined effort of Adams and Ward advocated the use of a new orthography known as the central dialect and the development of a common language. The result was chaotic and acrimonious. The Anglicans insisted on the Onitsha dialect, the Methodists embraced the central dialect. In 1948, the RCM created a new diocese at Owerri. RCM readers were then issued in two dialects the Onitsha and Owerri. The orthography controversy lasted for about 70 years. The gravity of the dispute could be better appreciated from the pamphlet published in 1957 by the protagonists of the old or the Lepsius orthography titled *Investigation into the new Igbo Orthography*.

What seems to be the case in the orthography dispute was that support or opposition to a particular orthography was not always due to linguistic considerations rather religious, political, and socio-economic considerations complicated the dispute. There is no doubt that Hausa and Yoruba language did not experience the kind of controversy that engrossed the Igbo language. Little wonder the challenges the Igbo nation face in Nigeria. Besides, there is dearth of literary work on the Igbo language studies especially during the wake of the orthography dispute and the civil war. The Igbo orthography dispute continued to rage until 1961 when the government set up a committee headed by Dr. S.E. Onwu to bring a lasting solution to the orthography conflict. The Onwu Committee then succeeded in setting up the standard Igbo alphabet that was accepted and adopted by the entire Igbo nation thus:

|   |   |    |    |    |   |   |    |    |    |   |   |
|---|---|----|----|----|---|---|----|----|----|---|---|
| A | B | CH | D  | E  | F | G | GB | GH | GW | H | I |
| Ị | J | K  | KP | KW | L | M | N  | NW | NY | Ñ | O |
| Q | P | R  | S  | SH | T | U | Ụ  | V  | W  | Y | Z |

The alphabets above represent the upper case of the Igbo alphabet while the lower case is being represented thus:

|   |   |    |    |    |   |   |    |    |    |   |   |
|---|---|----|----|----|---|---|----|----|----|---|---|
| a | b | ch | d  | e  | f | g | gb | gh | gw | h | i |
| ị | j | k  | kp | kw | l | m | n  | nw | ny | ñ | o |
| q | p | r  | s  | sh | t | u | ụ  | v  | w  | y | z |

With the orthography controversy apparently over with the setting up of Onwu Committee in 1961, the Igbo language studies under the SPILC moved into a new age that is, the age of standard Igbo.

### **3.5.1 The Igbo Language during the Biafra War (1967 to 1970)**

During the civil war, serious work was not done on the Igbo language and literary studies had to wait till after the Nigeria Biafra war. However, following the settlement of the dispute and the events of the Biafra war (1967 - 1970), the SPILC directed its tools to ensuring authentic development of the Igbo Language as well as the Igbo culture. It is interesting to note that the events that followed the Nigeria – Biafra war helped the development of the Igbo language. This is because regardless of the fact that the war brought a halt to printing and publishing in the language (Uwalaka 2001), it engendered an Igbo cultural revival, a new self awareness of the Igboness of the Igbo, indeed an authentic Igbo renaissance that parallels that of Europe. Hence, there was a new interest on Igbo mother tongue and the orthography and the dialect question was somewhat laid to rest.

### **3.5.2 The Igbo Language after the Biafra War 1970 to 1999.**

This period coincided with the period of standard Igbo or modern Igbo era. The period was heralded by the standardization committee set up by SPILC.

By the late 60s, the Igbo language had been made a requirement for the award of B.A/ (Hon) degree in the University of London see (Chijioke, 1995, Okwudishu 2010). The terms of the committee include to:

- adopt words from different Igbo dialects
- enrich the Igbo language
- to adopt loan words where there were no Igbo equivalent.

The major objectives among other things was to create a standard Igbo which could be understood by all Igbo nations, hence, it was expected to be more flexible than the Isuama, Union Igbo, and central Igbo dialects since it embraced almost all the dialects of the Igbo Language. Between 1971 and 1978, SPILC made the following educational developments/achievements:

- Conducted its annual seminars which were well attended by people from different parts of Nigeria and the Diaspora.
- Approved the recommendations of the standardization committee on the spelling of the Igbo words.
- Influenced the decision to establish a department of the Igbo Language and Culture at Alvan Ikoku College of Education.
- Recommended the rearrangement of Igbo alphabet.
- Made F.C. Ogbalu the Head of Department of Igbo language and culture at the Anambra College of Education, Awka.
- And influenced the decision to establish another department of Igbo at Federal Advanced College, Okene in the then Kwara State.
- Influenced the inclusion of the Igbo language among the subjects for the advanced level examination from 1979, among others.



Okwudishu (2010) asserts that apart from efforts at language development during these years, the Igbo language was taught as a school subject from 1940 to 1942 when it was included in the secondary school curriculum. It was first taken as an examination subject in 1942 for the senior schools Cambridge certificate. It was also introduced into grade II teachers college and between 1946 and 1947, about ten Igbo students were sent to the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London by the government and the missions for the study of the Igbo language. There are other achievements and development of the Igbo language between 1970 to date (see Journal of Igbo studies from 2005- date for details).

### 3.5.3 The Igbo Language at Present (1999 to 2014)

The Igbo language studies at present enjoy a number of impressive studies and publications. It is patient to appreciate the forebears of the Igbo language study that is, those who gave life to the Igbo language studies such as pita Nwanna of Omenuko, F.C. Ogbalu (1974) of standard Igbo: Parts to its development, Nwadike (2001) of the Igbo language in education. Oraka (1983) of the foundation of Igbo studies, Prof. C.I. Ikekeonwu the Director of NINLAN Aba Campus, Mba, Ugwuona et al (2013) of Igbo Adì Igbo-English, English Igbo Dictionary of linguistics and Literary studies, Nolue Emenanjo in collaboration with I.U. Nwadike and Dr. S.E. Ikeokwu of the Journal of Igbo studies (vols 1 to 8) in the university of Nigeria Nsukka among others. It is interesting to note that the introduction of linguistics and Igbo into our Nigeria universities and colleges of education has contributed immensely to the development of the Igbo language presently. This has also made it possible for serious studies and research in the Igbo language in the Nigerian Universities.

In spite of the above achievement, much progress have not been made considering the Igbo language experience from 1500 to date. The present status, institutional support, and the population of the three major Nigerian languages (Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba) are compared to ascertain the present state of the Igbo language when compared with Hausa and Yoruba in Nigeria. The table below shows the responses from our respondents:

*Frequency and Percentage Responses on the Status, Institutional Support, and Population of Users of Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba in Nigeria*

| Major Nigerian languages | Status |    | Institutional support |    | Population of users |    | Rank            |
|--------------------------|--------|----|-----------------------|----|---------------------|----|-----------------|
|                          | Freq   | %  | Freq.                 | %  | Freq.               | %  |                 |
| Hausa                    | 135    | 45 | 141                   | 47 | 150                 | 50 | 1 <sup>st</sup> |
| Igbo                     | 75     | 25 | 69                    | 23 | 66                  | 22 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> |
| Yoruba                   | 90     | 30 | 90                    | 30 | 84                  | 28 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> |

The analysis of the responses in the table above shows that Hausa language ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the status enjoyed by the language in Nigeria by 45%, Igbo is 3<sup>rd</sup> with 25%, while Yoruba is 2<sup>nd</sup> with 30% respectively. In terms of institutional support, the Igbo language has still the least with 23%, Hausa is 1<sup>st</sup> with 47%, and Yoruba is 2<sup>nd</sup> with 30%. In the table, the population of people that use Hausa is 50%, Igbo is 22%, while



Yoruba is 28% in Nigeria. In all the result from and is currently under severe threat of extinction.

We also observed that the Igbo language is considered to be endangered judging from its present status in Nigeria from the following stand point.

- Lack of seriousness in the use of the language in the media.
- Abusive borrowing and hyper-adaptation by educated native speaker.
- Preaching the communication in the Igbo language without practicing so by the indigenous speakers of the language especially the educated elite.
- The indigenous speakers of Igbo language largely shy away from using the language among others.

The above considerations are simply a reminder that, the bitter truth of no language, no culture and no culture no identity looms over the Igbo nation in Nigeria. Little surprise that Ndigbo have been facing enormous challenges in Nigeria and the contemporary world partly because of their negative attitude towards their God-given talents and endowments especially their language.

## **5. Conclusion**

In this paper, we have discussed the status of the Igbo language, before, during and after the Nigeria Biafra war. We observed that there are different claims about the origin of the Igbo people and their language. While some claim that Igbo people are from Israel, others claim that Igbo is autochthonous, each with glaring evidence to support the claim. We also observed that the Igbo language exhibits the highest dialect fragmentation, and that probably contributes to the Igbo orthography controversy before the Nigeria civil war. We also observed that attitude of the Igbo to their language presently is not encouraging as the Igbo language has the least status, institutional support, and population of users in Nigeria.

### **5.1 The Re-Birth: Recommendation**

The concern and bemoans for the Igbo language endangerment seems to have caught Igbo linguists off guard and hence have been prescribing remedies without the requisite understanding of the socio-economic dynamics that have affected the vitality of the Igbo language negatively or positively in different parts of Nigeria throughout the history of the Igbo language. It is worthy to note that because languages do not have independent lives from their speaker, it is bizarre that the hosts, whose socio-economic behaviours affect them, should embrace their language without further delay. Very little scholarship has been invested in understanding the ecology of the Igbo language and what it takes to sustain the vitality in this multilingual nation where several languages have coexisted with one another under an efficient division of labour in the repertoires that contain them. Under this situation, how can the Igbo nation expect any meaningful and effective involvement in the power system in the country Nigeria? It should be recalled that for the fact that languages have no lives that are independent of their speakers, languages do not kill languages; their own speakers do, in giving them up. Therefore, the Igbo nation should be mindful of the fact that solutions that focus on the victims rather than on the causes of their plights

are just as bad as environmental solutions that would focus on affected species rather than on the ecologies that affect the species.

Since every ethnic group nation exists with prestige and status only with its language embedded as a vital aspect of it, maintenance and development of the Igbo language is a necessary condition for the development of her ethnic group and the subsequent involvement in power nationally and internationally. Language is one of the aspects of culture that endows man with the power of civilization without which man is powerless. Power in the context of this paper relates to effectively using of the Igbo language by her inherent owners to influence and attract a greater part of socio-economic, political and sustainable development in this part of the country. The Igbo nation should obviously imbibe the wise saying that united we stand, divided we fall, and standing on and imbibing our language is not an exceptions. That is, ourselves, our families both those at home and across linguistic borders should show interest in the language. In addition more efforts in publications and extensive media outreach in the Igbo language should be made. In line with Ikekeonwu, the opening of an international airport in Igboland (Enugu) is likely to attract foreign business men and women, contractors, investors, among others to the Southeast. Basic textbooks on the learning of the Igbo language and culture could be published and placed at the point of entry (the airport) to help the visitors effectively chart their daily interactions with the indigenes. Additionally, Igbo people should make the Igbo language acquire much power of language infection in Nigeria and the world over. All these will go a long way in improving the present socio-economic and political structure as well as involve the people of Igbo nation effectively in socio-political situation and make them relevance in the power system in the Nigeria federation.

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## **18. Broadcasting in African languages: The Case of the Igbo language**

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This paper looks at the challenges and prospects of broadcasting in African languages. It also considers the problems of gradual erosion of communication strategies in African language due to the influence of modern communication systems and western values. There is the need to generate media that will encourage indigenous languages and indigenous communication systems instead of throwing our rich local communication values in the name of embracing civilization, thereby losing our African identity. The survey research method is adopted in this paper. Data are collected from different sections of the southeast regional residents, students, broadcasting industries, etc., for the ultimate purpose of giving a critical and constructive analysis to the scope of this paper, which is promoting and educating the Igbo on the different ways through which the Igbo language and culture should be promoted, especially in the broadcasting industry. The paper also highlights the challenges of African languages in a fast growing industry like broadcasting. It looks at hindrances to the effective use of Igbo language and other indigenous languages in the broadcasting industry. The paper identifies lack of enabling broadcasting policies as a major barrier to broadcasting in indigenous African languages. The challenges of dialectal differences, problems of translators and translating in African languages, technical terms and meta-language, inferiority complex in studying African languages were also identified. The paper recommends that Africans should study their languages to enable the broadcasting stations to have trained and qualified translators who will prepare news directly in the local languages. The government and mass media, especially the broadcasting industry have a great role to play in this regard.

### **1. Introduction**

Language is a means of human communication. It has been described as a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group co-operates. Bucher (1979:1) describes language as “the development of the basic forms of communication between human beings and the society”. Knowledge of the nature of African languages helps us to have a better understanding of the context of African broadcasting. Again, language policies and realities in African countries are complex and often controversial, and influence patterns of broadcasting. This situation is linked to the diverse languages spoken in most territories that were colonized.

Since the era of civilization, every society growth, progress and continuity strictly depends on a system of communication through which people would exchange ideas and feelings. The system of communication, from the mainstay of all other system. The African continent was not different in spite of their great linguistic diversity, especially in

Nigeria, where they communicated with each other for hundreds of years before the advent of colonialism. A country given her multi-lingual nature is forced to choose a colonist language as a first language and official language. Other indigenous languages became dormant because of the dominance of the foreign language. This kind of situation could be said to be true in Nigeria and most African countries that were colonized by the western world which forced foreign languages and cultures on them. In such, cases the indigenous languages face endangerment. According to Nwadike (2008:24), there are five levels of language endangerment. A language is

- a. potentially endangered when children of a cultural area start preferring the dominant language and learning the obsolescing language imperfectly. In this case, the language starts to loss children speakers;
- b. endangered if the youngest speakers are young adults and there are no or very few child speakers;
- c. seriously endangered when the youngest speakers are middle aged or past middle age;
- d. terminally endangered or moribund if there are only a few elderly speakers left, and
- e. dead/extinct when there are no speakers left at all (Nwadike (2008:24)).

It behooves us to say that the development of African indigenous languages lies in our hands. The main focus of this paper is raising awareness of Igbo's and sensitizing their mind toward ensuring that their mother tongue Igbo, does not join in the line of dead languages through the instrumentation of broadcasting and enhancing of the broadcasting houses as an agent of socialization in the Igbo language.

The human history from available evidence such as population's density, language diversity or even botanical (forest conservation) and archaeological research suggest that the Igbo race and their fore bearers have lived in their present homes from the dawn of human history. Although the Igbo race generally has the very similar cultures, they also show some local variations in cultures and customs.

The history of the Igbo people is dated back to thousands of years in history. Based on this variation, the Igbo land can be divided into five main sub-groups namely; the northern Igbo, Igbo-ukwu, Onitsha, Enugu, Asaba, Agbor. The southern Igbo-umuahia, Ngwa, Owerinta. The eastern Igbo -Afikpo, Arochukwu, Ohafia, Bende and the north-eastern Igbo Ogu-ukwu, Abakaliki. Subsequently divided into several other states which comprise the following state at present such as Abia State, Anambra State, Ebonyi State, Enugu State and Imo State. The 2006 census puts their population at 21 million, while the land area is about 15,800 square miles linguistically; they belong to the new Congo of the Niger Congo family. According to Ene (2005), because of the republican nature of the Igbo people, the degree of difference of varieties of Igbo language spoken today is extensive.



According to Thompson (2004:30) “we use language to talk about the experience of the world, including the words in our minds, to describe events and state the entities involved. In them, to influence their behavior, to express our own view point on things in the world, and to elicit and change theirs”. A good understanding of African languages helps us to know how we can use language to express and describe what how we feel especially in broadcasting language policies and realities in African countries are complex and often controversial, and influence patterns of broadcasting.

The problems African language is facing today; especially the Igbo language calls for urgent attention is to a great extent as result of poor attitude towards the language by native speakers. These attitudinal problems can be seen in various spheres of Igbo life including education, economy, socio-politics and religion.

This paper investigates neglect of African languages in broadcasting especially the Igbo language which faces the danger of drifting away if urgent measures are not taken.

It is the intention of this paper to find out the causes of the problems mentioned above and proffer possible solutions. And as Emenanjo (2007) posits that language and culture are inseparable, this research paper will go a long way in providing us with information on these factors that are responsible for the neglect of the Igbo language by its users especially in broadcasting. Akindele & Adegbite (1999:75) also lay emphasis on the need for government and religious organizations to ensure that the Igbo language, is always promoted by expanding and narrowing their functions and improving their structures; working on their orthography, standardizing those languages which are non-written and semi-standardized, translation of textbooks of other developed languages into these to enable them fulfill educational and technological roles.

More so, to make the broadcasting industry join in the campaign of salvaging the Igbo language, because language is a veritable and practical means of communication, it is the most potent vehicle for transmitting cultures, values, norms and beliefs from generation to generation.

## **2. Reviews**

The survival of the language of a people is very vital to the people’s survival on the whole. Banjo et al. (1971:24) posits that “language is not only a vehicle through which a peoples culture can be expressed, but also a medium of one’s thought, imagination creativity, aspirations, desire, emotions, indeed the entire human need and capacity” language covers everything that humans do in life. It makes man who he is and what he will eventually become. Fromkin and Rodman (1988) sees language as a system of signs that is also culture specific. This emphasizes that language is systematically different from others in the sense that each has a particular way of arranging the signs that encode meaning, and of communicating the word to it speakers.

Oyelaran (1990:22) posits that “language is not only the most important vehicles of communication and a peoples culture, but also the most distinctive of all the traits which separates human beings from other creatures. Underscoring the place of African languages in national development, Butler (1990) in his emphasis on the importance of language to our society writes; linguistic communication is without doubt one of the

most important features of human life and as we get better at inducing computers to stimulate it, the effect on our everyday are bound to multiply. Development in Africa should focus on the cultivation of a literate citizenry that can participate effectively in the socio-economic, political and cultural life of the nation. Development in this sense is human and languages chosen for that purpose must be those that will facilitate access to the information for the masses of the grassroots. This has been elusive in most parts of Africa as they heavily rely on Western languages.

Africans continue to use exogenous languages for education and broadcasting. According to wiki dictionary an exogenous language is one that is used as official, institutionalized language, but has no speech community in the political entity using it as officially. Exoglossic describes a non-indigenous language that is the main or the official language of a region or a country. Fishman (1971) perspective which recognizes three types of language policy labeled A, B and C according to Agbedo (2000:192), all the three types hinges on the notion of a "great tradition" and its relationship to the twin goals of nationalism and nationism. Fishman (1971) defines great traditions as the assumed existences of a set of cultural features, law, government, religion, history which is shared the nation and can serve to integrate the members of the state into a cohesive body. Such a great tradition usually has a one of its manifestations and its major vehicle of expression, a language which very often is the appropriate choice for adoption as the national language or the official language.

The existence or non-existence of a great tradition in a given nation. State determines which of the policy type to adopt. The policy A is adopted in nation state, where the ruling elite is of the opinion of creating an exoglossic state by adopting the language of their ex-colonial masters. This is usually the preferred option in linguistically heterogeneous countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal etc., type B policy is adopted in endoglossic countries where the elite acknowledge the existence of a great tradition with a related language of expression.

Bamgbose (1998:6) laments on the absurd situation of indigenous language in Africa, the consequences of this linguistic situation in relation to the status of indigenous language is that the native speaker who should appreciate and extol the languages and the cultural patterns, also to preserve and transmit it, do not take pride in using the languages, as English has caught their fancy. Hence, casting light on the phenomenal dimensions of the continued languages.

Bamgbose (1998:9) Notes the effects of this continued dominance can be seen in alienation resulting in unfavorable attitude to African languages. The attitude may be illustrated in the preference for early acquisition of these languages ( with two years old being made to speak English or French in elite homes), taking pride in proficiency, in the imported languages at the expense of a sound knowledge of one's own mother tongue, preference to written communications in a European language, addiction to information dissemination in imported languages by electronic and print media, and lack of interest in, and concern for the development of indigenous languages.

Broadcasting promotes a language to a very large extent by its nature; it is the singular most powerful universal means of instant public communication, through the

conveying of information, entertainment, education and persuasion in form of programmes, amongst its unique attributes is the ability to instantly reach a wider more varied group of consumers, than any other medium. According to Bourgault (1995), this unique usefulness lies in its capacity to surmount geographical and economic barriers to extend to the rich and to the poor, old and young, rural and urban dwellers the educated and the illiterate, the professional, the majority and the minority.

The high linguistic diversity of many African countries (Nigeria alone has over 500 languages, one of the greatest concentrations of linguistic diversity in the world) has made language policy a vital issue in the past colonial era. In recent years, African countries have become increasingly aware of the value of their linguistic inheritance. Language policy being developed in recent times are mostly aimed at multilingualism for e.g. all African languages are considered official languages of the African union (AU). 2006 was declared by the African union as the year of African languages, however mid-sized languages are used on the radio in newspapers and in primary school education, and some of the larger ones are considered national languages, only a few are official at the national level (UNESCO (1989)).

Research show that Africa's emerging independent radio has become an avenue for corroding their society's languages and cultures, while they have been insensitive to native languages; they are successful in domesticating the languages of their former European colonizers.

Using the experience of Ghana's radio, raises an important question about the relationship between African native languages and the development of a true African broadcasting system. Isaac (2005:3) argues " a true African broadcasting systems that allow for mass participation can develop if only the broadcasting sector and policy makers address the native language deficiency in broadcasting."

According to Ansah (1985), languages play a very critical role in national broadcast systems; while western and Asian countries have relied on their own languages for broadcasting, sub-Saharan African countries continue to rely overwhelmingly on euro-imperial languages English or French for broadcasting even though majority of their population do not comprehend this languages. African broadcasters, policy makers and media scholars have traditionally failed to examine the role that dependency on foreign languages has played in the failure of national broadcasting systems to encourage civic participation in the media.

Using the experience of Ghana pluralistic and independent radio with its continued and overwhelming dependence on English and its insensitivity to the countries native language, one may ask, why is Africa emerging independent broadcast, particularly radio, not promoting the predominant use of more widely spoken native languages in broadcast? Senghor (1967:97) posits that "in the bid to meet the need for entertainment and pleasure, broadcasters are insensitive to their society's native languages and local cultural products by airing more foreign programs, broadcasting with foreign languages and in some cases mimicking foreign accents."

Kamin (1996) asserts that Africa policies to protect and promote native languages and cultures in broadcast reforms are woefully inadequate or totally absent through the

role of culture and language as integrating factors is clearly evident in many African societies. African societies have developed historically and continue to exist on the basis of strong cultural, linguistic and ethnic bonds. UNESCO (1961) notes that prior to handing over political governance to African native administrators in the 1960's, efforts were made in some countries to indigenize broadcasting. Native broadcasters, administrators and technicians were trained to take over from departing expatriates. Immediately, following independence African government recognized that in order to realize national and rural development goals and to reach the majority rural peasant population, radio broadcasting should accommodate native languages and cultural differences.

According to Mython (1983) during the 1960s some government began to introduce native languages for radio broadcasting. For instance in Zambia where there were about twenty major languages spoken by seventy-three ethnic groups, time was allocated to seven native language in proportion to the size of language in the nation. NBC News (2000) posits that president Kenneth Kaunda's tribal balancing policy instituted upon Zambia's independence, broadcast is a variety of native languages including Bemba and Nyanja were added to English in 1967. In the mid-1980s Kanode, Lozi, Lunda, Lurale and Tonga were allocated broadcasting time. In 1988 however all Zambian languages were moved from the general radio service.

According to Spitulink (1992) by 1990, Zambia radio 2 and radio 4 were broadcasting only on English. Seven Zambian languages shared equal time on radio 1, although the language representing the largest groups of people received the best times of day broadcasting.

A thorough investigation into the African broadcasting industry reveals how much local and indigenous language is been used and encouraged to be used. Though broadcasting was introduced in most African countries late, one of such countries is South Africa in 1976. Kobokoane Sunday Times (1997) also notes on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1996, two years after the ANC came to power, the SABC reorganized its three TV channels, so as to be more representative of different language groups. This resulted in the downgrading of Afrikaans status by reducing its airtime from 50% to 15%, a move that alienated many Afrikaans speakers.

Lowu (2001) also notes South Africa television is broadcast in all eleven official languages, as well as in German, Hindi, Portuguese and sign languages. South Africa Broadcasting Corporation II the "channel for the nations" carries programming in a range of languages, including most of the SABC'S Afrikaans programming. According to Lowu, the channel has a high proportion of locally produced programming.

Gedye (2010) in his view reveals that in the overwhelming majority of African countries, broadcasting has been the most controlled medium for Technical and political reasons. The technology limits to the frequency spectrum and its allocation of time at both the international and local level have meant that unlike the press not just anyone can broadcast. Government Gazette (2010) notes that broadcasting ability to reach the majority of citizens in a country has obvious political implications, colonial administration which introduced broadcasting in Africa, controlled it and used it for



largely political propaganda purposes. Post-colonial government also followed a policy of broadcasting control mainly for political reasons.

According to Mammburu (2011) British administrators introduced radio into Ghana, despite the fact that Ghana had about seventy-nine native languages. According to united nation education scientific cultural organization (UNESCO 1989), all radio programmes were broadcasting in English, the national and official language. However, British administrators soon realized that radio broadcasting in Ghana must use vernacular languages if its program were to be understood by the natives. So in 1939 colonial administrators began introducing Ghanaians languages and personal into radio broadcasting. Ghana radio began to broadcast in Ewe, Twi, and Hausa local languages. Two other languages, Ga, Dagbani, were added during the 1940s.

Ansah (1979) states that by 1960 the state broadcasting system changed to Ghana broadcasting corporation (GBC). GBC was using fifteen of the seventy-nine native languages to broadcast different national and regional programs throughout the country.

He further states that the ethnic language used for national programs included Asante/Akuapim, Twi, Fante, Ewe, Hausa, Ga, Adangbe, Nzema, Dagbani, Dagaari and Kasem. Those used for all the governments' non-formal radio education programs in the northern and upper regions of the country were Fafra, Buli, Kussal, Sisaala and Gonja.

We can estimate about 400 indigenous languages spoken in Nigeria and only few have writing systems. One of the key functions of broadcasting identified by Lawell (1948) is cultural transmission. This is the ability of the broadcasting industry to communicate norms, rules and values of society. This function is also regarded as a teaching function of the broadcasting industry, however, what culture is there for the Nigeria broadcasting corporation (NBC) to transmit or teach when, majority of what they transmit and teach are foreign to Nigeria?

There is no gainsaying in the fact that the language of development is the mother tongue or a language rooted in the peoples culture and tradition, a language in which the generality of the nation's populace have unimpeded and unconscious facility in all forms of communication. Essien (2003). But the reverse is the case in the use of Igbo language in broadcasting, where nobody is interested in the development of the language, there is likelihood of culticide. This is the extermination of cultures, analogous concept to (physical) genocide. Olusanmi Babarinde, a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Linguistics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in an interview laments the poor use of African languages in the broadcasting industry especially the Igbo language. He complains on the poor attitude of the people towards the language, the incompetent staff in the broadcasting industry, and lack of implementation of language policy by the government to enhance the study and of these languages, has turned our broadcasting industry into a dumping place for foreign languages and culture, thereby promoting them, degrading the language of our root. It is obvious this attitude of ours have made other tribes to look down on our language. Nwadike (2002) notes that in the northern states like any other part of the country, Igbo studies started receiving serious attention after the Nigeria civil war. All these go a long way to describe the bitter experiences Igbo languages face in other facets of the society especially the broadcasting industry.



From the foregoing it is obvious that the bid to get a desired broadcasting industry in Nigeria is hinged on reaching out to the illiterate in their local languages. Little wonder researchers like Awoniyi (2002) describes the masses as people that would express themselves and their culture better in their own language, for effective communication. This underscores the importance of broadcasting in African indigenous languages and gives impetus for enabling environment for broadcasting in Nigerian indigenous languages.

### **3. Methodology**

The main data for this research is from the Igbo Unit of Radio Nigeria. The nature and objective of this study have necessitated the adoption of the survey research method for this work. This method was adopted because it is considered a suitable research method for behavioral studies, as it involves getting the views of people about why they behave in a particular way and how they will behave if given certain conditions. The research population for this research work constitutes the programme planners, staff and the manager, Igbo unit of radio Nigeria were the people that form the population of this study. The population of the study is 10 respondents. Hence, the universe of study of this research is all the broadcasting houses in Nigeria but limited to Radio Nigeria.

This broadcasting station was chosen through purposive sampling. This is because the entire population cannot be reached; the choice of radio Nigeria, Umuahia is predicated upon the fact that its major target audience speaks the same language that is Igbo. Therefore, it will be worthwhile to evaluate whether communication can be effective in indigenous languages or not. Information from content analysis formed the primary data of this research. The programmes schedule of the station for 2008 was analyzed to know the language of broadcasting, time allocated to each and the understanding of the language of broadcasting by the target audience vis-à-vis their languages and social backgrounds. The research also employed the interview method.

### **4. Data Presentation and Analysis**

This section presents a detailed analysis and interpretation of data gotten from the survey research. The programme schedule of the station radio-Nigeria, pace-setters F.M., Umuahia and the interview was used for this analysis. The result from the investigation on radio broadcast programme at radio Nigeria, Pace-setters F.M., Umuahia, leaves us to desire more use of African languages, especially Igbo language for broadcasting to enable effective communication.

#### **4.1 Statistical Information on the Programmes**

| DAYS | NO OF<br>PROGAMS | TIME<br>ALLOCATED | TOTAL NO ENG<br>PROGRAMMESS | TIME<br>ALLOCATED | TOTAL NO<br>IGBO<br>PROGRAMMESS | TIME<br>ALLOCATED |
|------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| SUN  | 40               | 16.5              | 31                          | 12.2              | 9                               | 4.3               |
| MON  | 39               | 17.5              | 28                          | 12.5              | 11                              | 5                 |

|       |     |       |     |      |    |      |
|-------|-----|-------|-----|------|----|------|
| TUE   | 46  | 17.5  | 34  | 12.3 | 12 | 5.2  |
| WED   | 36  | 16.5  | 23  | 12.2 | 13 | 4.3  |
| THURS | 50  | 18.3  | 34  | 13.3 | 16 | 5.2  |
| FRI   | 43  | 12.5  | 35  | 10.2 | 8  | 2.3  |
| SAT   | 38  | 14.5  | 28  | 10.2 | 10 | 4.3  |
| TOTAL | 292 | 113.3 | 213 | 82.9 | 79 | 30.6 |

From the statistical information on radio programmes we arrived at the following deductions:

Percentage of number of English programmes

If 292 = 100% then it implies that

$213 = 213/292 \times 100/1 = 72.9\%$

Percentage number of Igbo programmes

If 292 = 100%, then it implies that

$79 = 79/292 \times 100/1 = 27.05\%$

Percentage time for English programmes

If 113.3 = 100% then. It implies that

$82.9 = 82.9/113.3 \times 100/1 = 73.16\%$

Percentage time for Igbo programmes

If 113.3 = 100 then, it implies that

$30.6/113.3 \times 100/1 = 27\%$

The total impression of these statistical findings is summarized, as follows:

| PROGRAMMES | NO OF PROGRAMMES (%) | TIME (%) |
|------------|----------------------|----------|
| English    | 64.09                | 72.62    |
| Igbo       | 35.91                | 27.38    |

From the analysis and interpretation of the data, we find that, there is a high degree of difference in the two languages which are used for broadcasting programmes at Radio Nigeria Pace-setters F.M., Umuahia.

From interviews, we outline the problems of broadcasting in African language in radio Nigeria Pace –setters F.M., Umuahia.

#### 4.2 Non-uniformity/ Dialectal differences

According to Echeruo (2001:1), the Igbo language is spoken by an estimated twenty million Nigerians. The Igbo language instead of gaining height in the hierarchy of languages is currently moving in the downward trend as a result of the quest for superior

dialectal status amongst the Igbo people. Afigbo (1982) states ‘‘Igbo language consist of many dialects; as such every community has its dialect to preserve at the expense of a pan-Igbo language’’ Okoye and Onwuegbuchunam (2011:547) observe, ‘‘there are Onitsha dialect, Owerri dialect, Abakiliki, Nsukka and Udi dialect etc.; each claims to be superior to other dialect’’. Anyaegbuna (2012:30) notes, ‘‘many have tried to argue that Igbo is multi dialectal language and that some of this dialects are rather difficult to comprehend’’. Afigbo (1982) went on to state that ‘‘ this obsession of preservation of fragmented dialects at the expense of pan-Igbo language, has made it impossible for Igbo vocabulary enhancement.

Non-uniformity of language across African makes it difficult to standardize codes used in labeling and identifying media. Different languages are used in African to broadcast news, example in Nigeria; we have different indigenous languages such as Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, and Ibibio etc. And broadcasting stations in this part of Nigeria broadcast using the language that will be well understood by the natives of that particular or geographical area thereby making it difficult for non-indigenes to get the information passed across that moment.

Non-uniformity of language is a problem in broadcasting, because Igbo language has different dialects and as such using one of these dialects to broadcast makes it impossible for one to satisfy the communication hunger of all Igbo. Nwaozuzu (2008) captures the diversity of the Igbo dialects. This raises very difficult problem owing to the existence of numerous dialects; following this dialectal difference it is impossible to broadcast in all the dialects of Igbo language.

#### **4.3 Problems of Translators and Translating**

The processing of translating, coining vocabulary and developing grammar books in African languages, the Europeans engaged in the venture used vocabulary that reflected settler and missionary ideology. They coined phrases and words useful for talking about Africans, not engaging them. They sought to understand African cosmology on their own terms, and any conception that clashed with their own perceptions were marginalized and devalued. This kind of attitude is still reflecting in indigenous languages broadcasts whereby they are translated from English and not originally developed in the target language.

The problem of translating the news to other people who do not understand a particular dialect or language becomes a problem. The news needs to be translated in various African languages/ dialects to enable audience that are not reached to be covered, as result translators who have good knowledge of both language are needed. But some language have not been reduced into writing, hence it causes problems for the translators. Some of the broadcasters who do not make use of linguistic norms in passing information find it difficult to even translate.

Some African languages, where they make use of tone or diacritic marks, when the translators who translates from the source languages to target language fails to make use of those diacritics properly, we find out that proper information cannot be disseminated to the masses. E.g. in Igbo language where broadcasters do not spell out or

pronounce some Igbo vowels properly like /ĩ ọ ụ /, Igbo people cannot understand the information he/she is trying to pass across. Therefore lack of good translators in translating the news to people becomes a problem in broadcasting.

#### **4.4 Technical Terms**

There are some technical terms in English that are not found in local African languages. This may be due to existing situation or development in the content. For example, the word “Boko Haram” there is no defined term for that word in Igbo language. Also “fuel subsidy” there is no term for that in our local languages. If these words are not properly encoded people will not understand the information the information broadcasters are passing across. The problem of translating these technical or foreign terms from source language to the target language used in the broadcast media is a big problem militating against effective broadcasting in African languages. In the course of broadcasting there may exist some new situations or global issues happening in the world which might be alien to our indigenous languages. So the problem becomes how to capture these new concepts ideas and issues using the available linguistic materials in our language to make for clearer understanding amongst the natives without altering any piece of information for complete and efficient dissemination of information.

#### **4.5 Inferiority Complex**

Inferiority complex in studying in African language, especially the Igbo language is a hindrance in broadcasting in Igbo language. The negligence and poor attitude towards the study of Igbo language may serve as handicap towards effective dissemination of information to Igbo's as well as Africans as media houses may run short of words to use, or there will be lack of trained and skilled broadcasters who can cast news in African languages as such limiting its usage in broadcasting, the inability of Africans to study their languages may cause African language to be obsolete and cause extinction because it is no longer used, spoken or studied. Okoye and Onwuegbuchunam (2011:547) have shown that inferiority complex affect Igbo people in the use of their language. The Igbo people feel proud speaking other languages like English, Yoruba, Hausa and they shy speaking their local languages /dialect.” The other phase of an Igbo man is that he will proudly communicate fluently in Hausa, Yoruba and other tongues freely in public, but rarely in Igbo. We often try to become more native than our native host, but hostile to our own very native identity. Are we ashamed of being Igbo” Anyaegbuna (2013:30) notes, “The greatest problem facing Igbo man is the Igboman's attitude to his language. An Igbo prefers greeting in English than his own language. Anyaegbuna (2012:30) posits that “it is glaring that NdiIgbo equally stand out as one group that would rarely communicate freely and proudly in Igbo publicly “ there is the new wave of hybridize Igbo through the integration of English and Igbo what is popularly called Engligbo. This is the worst form of adulteration that is currently experienced in Igbo language. It is more damaging because children easily picks it and turn it into a popular slang among the populace. Uzoma Okpo, a popular radio presenter and Director of radio service, Broadcasting Corporation of Abia State (BCA) urges “ the Igbo speaking states to

conduct their business in Igbo as their northern counterparts are doing in Hausa” Daily Sun (2012: 29).

#### **4.6 Government Negligence**

The government in Igbo states is practically not doing enough to put the Igbo language in the scheme of first class languages of the country. The government of the Igbo state are still not proactively promoting Igbo language’s place as a “multi- million language”

The “Asụsụ Igbo Teta” (Wake up Igbo Language) association which held its annual conference in 2012 in Umuahia, which it started in July 2009 at Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education met its shocker of life when many Igbo sons and daughters, traditional rulers and top government official who was supposed to grace the occasion were nowhere to be found. This reveals the place of Igbo language to the ruling Igbo political elites.

There is the orthography controversy to contend with. Government concerned has not done enough to develop and sustain viable language education policy. If existing language policies only remain in paper and files, indigenous languages like Igbo shall remain endangered. Ogunsiji & Fakeye (2012:69) assert:

To ask the language needs of the contemporary Nigeria today is perhaps not interesting. In one sense, the present situation provides a short-term answer. Given the position of English as the official language and language of inter-ethnic communication, nothing is virtually lost by being an English language monolingual but it seems all is lost by being monolingual in one of the Nigerian languages. For as long as English remains the language of international communication, a rational language policy must take the dominance of English into account.

Going by the above, it seems that every language policy that would work in favour of the indigenous languages must tilt towards bilingualism whereby both English and the indigenous languages are given their proper places. Hence, any bogus policy that tends to relegate English to the background in preference for the indigenous languages may face stiff resistance.

#### **5. Discussion of Findings**

The discussion on the findings was based on the research questions. On the whole, as far as African indigenous languages are concerned, we have seen from the study that broadcasting industry has not lived up to its expectations. One of the key factors identified by Lawell (1948) is cultural transmission. Emenanjo (1999:83) has shown that “language is the key to the heart of the people; if we lose the key we lose the people, a lost language is a lost tribe, a lost tribe is a lost culture; a lost culture is invaluable knowledge lost . The whole vast of archives and expertise will be consigned to oblivion; of course, it goes without saying that the social attitude of a people towards their language affects it positively or negatively. For the speakers of the minority languages,



the desire to belong to a more recognized language makes them hide their identity by not using their languages at all. Sometimes, this attitude compels them to inter-marry and melt into their new-found filial ethnolinguistic group. Organization like the media has not helped matters in the development of indigenous languages. News broadcast in the local languages are nothing to write Home about and efforts are not made to improve the quality at all. Even the so-called major languages, which seem to be doing better still require more determined efforts to get them to perform. The development of the indigenous languages. For instance, the policy statement in the language provision of the 1977 National Policy on Education inter alia, stipulates thus: government will ensure that the medium of instruction will be principally the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community; and to this end will: (i) develop the autography for many more Nigerian languages, (ii) produce text books in Nigerian languages. We can all agree that this policy has remained theoretical because of many other factors including the strong influence of English as a language of civilization and also lack of trained the development of the indigenous languages. For instance, the policy statement in the language provision of the 1977 National Policy on Education inter alia, stipulates thus: Government will ensure that the medium of instruction will be principally the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community; and to this end will: (i) develop the autography for many more Nigerian languages, (ii) produce text books in Nigerian languages. We can all agree that this policy has remained theoretical because of many other factors including the strong influence of English as a language of civilization and also lack of trained teachers in these areas. Many of the African indigenous languages now face the risk of going into extinction; the threat posed to Nigerian indigenous languages by foreign languages is as a result of using the English language of wider communication in the broadcasting industry.

## 6. Recommendations

From the data analyzed, it can be seen that the English language programmes are given prominence in the Radio Nigeria, pace setters F.M, Umuahia, the analysis point to the fact that Radio Nigeria Umuahia should be encouraged to promote the Igbo language and culture by giving prominence to the Igbo language programmes. Besides, Igbo programmes and news could be generated *ab initio* from the language instead of translating from English. Again, parents should also encourage the use of Igbo language in their homes and make sure the first language the child is introduced to is Igbo rather than English. It is therefore recommended that books, magazine and newspaper publishers interested in the development of indigenous publishing should co-operate with the Bible Society of Nigeria in this regard and also consider entering the religious publications market. State governments should also work with the society with regard to the development of their various indigenous languages.

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## **19. The Imperatives of Nigerian Languages in Sustainable Development**

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Man can achieve virtually nothing without the use of language. It is a means by which a people in business, scientific research, political interaction, etcetera, exchange information and ideas, develop plans, proposals and policies. Language enables us to understand one another and to keep in touch with other people at all times. Language is used in decision making process and it is a medium through which relationships are created, extended and maintained. It is an instrument that could be used for meaningful political, social, economic, scientific and technological development. This paper discusses the imperatives of the indigenous languages of Nigeria in adding value to Nigerians' scientific and technological development for sustainable development of Nigeria.

### **Introduction**

Africans, especially Nigerians have been brainwashed to believe the fiction that the use and study of our indigenous language(s) is retrogressive, stupid and even foolish. Recent studies have, however, shown that the use and study of African languages is the cornerstone of Africa's scientific and technological development. Western powers, i.e. America, Britain, Germany and France have developed over the years due to their splendid ability to use, and propel their language(s) in all spheres of their lives to greater heights. Before renaissance; the Arab world was the most powerful and developed in terms of scientific, technological, social, political and economic spheres. The Western powers recognized that; went and captured the Arab world, translated all their scholarly books into the European language, and added value to them. Presently, development has shifted from the Arab world (Middle East) to the Western powers. To ensure sustainable development in all ramifications, Nigeria must stand up from its slumber, not by the use of the sword and heavy artillery bombardments, but through the use of the tongue (the use of our indigenous language(s) in developing our sociological, cultural, religious, scientific and technological base which will go along way in sustaining her development.

### **Language Policy in Nigeria**

The main thrust of language education policy enunciated at various times, especially in 1977 and revised in 1981, is to develop the various indigenous Nigerian languages and to enhance teaching and learning through the use of indigenous languages. The major points of the policy state: "Government appreciates the importance of language as a means of promoting social interaction and national cohesion; and preserving cultures. Thus, every child shall learn the language of the immediate environment..." The policy went further to state that, at the early childhood/pre-primary education level, government will ensure



that, the medium of instruction is principally the mother tongue or the language of the immediate environment. From the fourth year of schooling, English language shall progressively be used as medium of instruction and the language of the immediate environment, while French shall be taught as a subject. To implement these policies, government promise to provide the necessary basic infrastructure that will make the policy work and achieve its desired objectives.

However, the desire by government to foster National Unity and make learning more meaningful, practical and child centered, through the National language policy is not yielding any positive result. The policy might be said to be good, but it is surrounded by a lot of predicaments. One of the major problems is the lack of adequately trained teachers to teach the three major Nigerian languages. The few available teachers are overworked and overstretched to the extent that they cannot put in their best in imparting knowledge to the students. Apart from the problem of teachers, the multilingual nature of this country has made it impossible to implement the policy. Many people are not ready to leave their language(s), to study another person's language. Also, the lack of seriousness by the government is another predicament. Materials that are supposed to be provided by the government to make the policy workable are not readily available. It is therefore obvious that the government has failed in this direction. To reverse these ugly trends, the teacher-training curriculum being used in teacher training institutions across this country should be reviewed and many changes and innovations added. Teachers should also be trained in the effective use of mother tongue. Workshops, seminars and conferences should be organized for teachers regularly in order to keep them abreast of the new innovations in indigenous languages teaching. Primary education as a course in Colleges of Education and Elementary Education as a course at the University should also undergo some major review. The aim is to transform the existing training curriculum in order to obtain the expected relevance and functionality. Also, adequate funding should be made for the present language policy to succeed. Government should, therefore, prepare to make arrangements to ensure that the funds are made available to support relevant organs for the development of relevant teaching and learning materials.

### **Nigerian Languages**

Nigerian languages are languages that have their basis in Nigeria. They are languages being spoken predominately in Nigeria. In other words, these are languages with strong holds in Nigeria. According to Hansford, et al (1976), there are about 350 languages and dialects spoken across the length and breath of Nigeria. Some scholars claim that the languages being spoken in Nigeria are over 500 (Sidi, 2006). Out of these numbers of languages and dialects spoken in Nigeria, three have been selected as Nigeria's major languages. Orthographies of these languages are being developed, though, much is still being desired. The languages are: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. Hausa being the predominant language spoken especially in the northern part of Nigeria, and Igbo, being predominantly spoken in the eastern part of Nigeria, with Yoruba, being predominantly spoken in the western part of this country. Most of the languages spoken in Nigeria could be classified into four major language groups (Greenberg, 1963). These include: the

Afro-Asiatic language family; the Khoisan; the Niger-Kordofanian and the Nilo-Sahara languages. In spite of these numbers of languages being spoken in Nigeria and their speakers who are diverse in religion, social status, political class, education and kinship lining has remained an entity that is indivisible. Some say, this is a mere coincidence, while others say, it has been destined by God. To sum it, Nigeria is still united because we have learnt to leave with one another; tolerating and accepting one another's differences. The Nigerian polity is a good example of an idle sportsmanship.

### **The National Language Question**

The acquisition of an alternative language, because of the proximity of the people who speak the language, offer an alternative to one's native group language; because the mixture of values that a learner often acquires make it impossible for him to feel like a member of either group. In the process, he may come to a somewhat painful point at which his original roots are no longer strong, but at which he does not wish to cut off from them completely in favour of a new allegiance to the values of the target language culture. Once the individual is through this stage, he may benefit from the personal enrichment created by his ability to participate in two cultures (Wilkins, 1985).

There are varying attitudes towards a common language, namely: extreme favourable, indifferent and hostile attitudes. Those who adopt extreme favourable attitude regard the target languages more important than their own language and tend to neglect their own. For the favourable attitudes, the speakers regard the language as a useful adjunct which gives them membership into a larger community, yet they have a more intimate emotional commitment to their language, e.g. Plateau languages to Hausa. The hostile attitude regards the common language as something forced upon them to deprive them of their own identity, e.g. attitude of the Welsh language society to English. Language can only be a helpful bond of unity where attitudes to it are not hostile. According to Hansford (1976), no language has any intrinsic superiority over another. All languages are capable of equal development. Language is therefore, value-free in relation to potential performance and a language spoken by only a few hundred people could be put to all manner of uses. It would be embarrassing at this stage of our political development, therefore, to continue to use English as our National language. Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba can be regarded as National language, so far as they have large constituencies in Nigeria. English lacks any of such constituency in Nigeria, and it is clearly not a rallying point for even a minority community in Nigeria. Bangbose (1983); estimates the speaking population of English in Nigeria to about 10%. Amayo (1983); Adegbite (2003) and Sidi (2006) answer the National language question in Nigeria by saying that, it is a shame to note that government is yet to put in any extra-efforts to make Nigerian languages grow. It is believe that an effort by the government would lead to the emergence of one of Nigeria's major languages as a National language.

We may also ask ourselves whether it is possible for a language to emerge as a National language in Nigeria; given our sociolinguistic backgrounds. I strongly believe that the answer to this question is in the affirmative, YES! India, the sociolinguistic giant, after choosing fourteen indigenous languages as National language, got resistance from

more than one thousand other linguistic groups and when Hindi was finally proclaimed as the sole official language of India, government was severely shaken; but this could not deter the determined government of India from adopting an indigenous language as a National language. Swahili in Tanzania is gradually replacing English and very soon, it is hoped that English would be forced to assume the status of a foreign language.

The fact that we are still using English as our National language reveals an appalling state of the country's psyche about its identity and direction as a republic. English language showcases, as part of the conspiracy theory, the demise of Nigerian languages which curiously pushes us in trenches upon one another. Regionalism, ethnicism and nepotism are partly traceable to our misunderstanding of our regional and ethnic languages found in Nigeria nationalism. Self-actualization and a National identity will continue to elude us, in as much as we live, adore and dwell on anything foreign and disrespect anything indigenous. Let us also ask this question at this junction: what language shall we prefer as Nigerians, a National language? Is it English or one of our indigenous languages? There is nothing wrong in trying with an "open mind" to choose one of our numerous languages as a National language and to gradually phase out English as a National language. Records have shown that it was possible in China, Russia, Britain and England (Carslie, 2006). We cannot continue to use English language of the Britons, while our indigenous languages are in decline in our homes and workplaces. Our youths are facing challenges at home and abroad when it comes to the use of our languages, and some of our parents, brothers and sisters are not doing anything about this matter. A decline in the use of our indigenous languages is a decline in our character, ethics, education, culture, traditions and everything else. If you go to China, they speak, teach, educate, trade and transact business in Chinese. If you go to Russia, Russians speak, teach, educate, trade and transact business in Russian language. If you go to Germany, Germans speak, teach, educate, trade and transact business in German. In Britain, the Britons speak, teach, educate, trade and transact in English. In the Arabian counties, the Arabs speak, teach, educate, and transact governmental and private business in Arabic; and the same thing happens in France, India, Japan and China. Sadly and unfortunately, when you come to Nigeria, with her beautiful regions and ethnic nations, you see something different – language decline and strangely too. Nigeria forces its citizens to teach, educate and transact governmental and non-governmental business in the foreign language, called English! This is a smack in the face and a disgrace to Nigeria and her citizens.

For our situation, we know have to adopt the peace formula. This formula starts with the existence of the numerous Nigerian languages, functioning side-by-side with English (the state at which we are today) this is to be followed by cultural fusion of the Nigerian society with linguistic development which will lead to one of the languages emerging as the national language during which English assumes the status of a foreign language.

### **The Imperatives of Using Nigerian Language(s)**

To ensure sustainability in government policy initiatives and advancement, we should know that it is paramount to use our indigenous languages in carrying out our public and private, government and non-government activities. The use of our indigenous language(s) will increase our tourism network and better National, regional and local economies. For example, those multinationals coming to partner with Nigeria within the oil industry and others, will have to learn our languages. If not, it might be impossible to operate and carry out transactions within the industry and with other industries. It will move our languages to the global stage and even become internationalized. The internalization will set the language up to compete with other international languages in that order. Our languages will become sources of revenue; because individuals and nations will flood our lands to learn our languages in order to carry out businesses with us just as we are presently doing; flooding other people's land and learning their languages. Our local authorities or language instructors will become high value assets in high demand, respect at home and abroad. Everything is not oil and gas. Our languages can also generate funds and better our economy, and additional engineering and sources of revenue for Nigeria. Whatever language is chosen, all the benefits enumerated above will certainly be for the socio-economic advancement of our country, Nigeria and Nigerians.

Countries that have adopted indigenous languages have never been found lagging behind in terms of development efforts and sustainability. Japan, Russia, China and India have now become world powers. The secret is that, any education received in the language of the people enriches them, apart from raising their psyche; it also makes them relevant with regards to their contribution to National development. They can be also understand and participate fully in all sectors of the economy because, they are totally free from any cultural and communication barriers.

### **Disadvantages of Using a Foreign Language to Develop Nigeria**

In a research carried out by Bamgbose (2001), it was discovered that the use of English in carrying out government business is retrogressive. Take for instance the case of Junior Staff in government establishments, many instructions given to them by their superior cannot be carried out due to the fact that they cannot understand the instruction passed to them in English. People that are attending board meetings can bear witness to the fact that a lot of hours are being spent on correcting minutes of meetings. Of course, such meetings are conducted in English, even when members, including the chairman and secretary are from the same linguistic group. If such meetings were to be conducted in our indigenous languages, it is certain that such grammatical errors in the minutes will be minimal and easily corrected.

### **Suggestions**

Based on our discussion, this paper proposes the following suggestions to improve the development of Nigerian languages for a sustainable development of Nigeria:

- a. There should be an enforcement of the National Language Policy. That is to say, henceforth, the business of the legislative Assemblies should be conducted in our indigenous languages.

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- b. English language should cease to be Nigeria's Official language. It should be replaced with one of the three major Nigeria languages; i.e. Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba; or even any of the other 350 languages spoken in Nigeria.
  - c. Part of the qualifications for employment into the public service of Nigeria, should be, the ability to communicate in any of the three major Nigeria languages in addition to one's mother tongue.
  - d. One of the conditions for registration of political parties must be that, the party symbol and logo must reflect the cultural heritage and/or identity of the Nigerian people.
  - e. Every mobilization or political rally must be conducted in our indigenous language(s).
  - f. Massive transaction of science and technology books and other related teaching and learning materials should commence henceforth in Nigeria.
  - g. Every foreign National willing/washing to come into Nigeria for either public or private purpose must learn to communicate in any of the major Nigerian languages; depending on the geopolitical environment he/she wishes to settle in.
  - h. Nigeria languages teachers should be encouraged by way of remuneration or any other possible way in order to enhance their productivity in Nigerian languages teaching.

### **Conclusion**

If the government of this country is actually serious on the issue of sustainable development of Nigeria, the issue of indigenous languages development and usage must be taken with all forms of seriousness. Nigeria should realize that, no nation of the world has been able to develop to greater heights without the use of its indigenous language(s). China, Japan, Russia, America, Britain and France have become world powers today as a result of their ability to use their indigenous language(s) and not foreign ones. From our own experiences, we have been able to realize that world development generally is not just peculiar to the use of English alone. Other languages of the world stand even greater chances of developing science and technology base for countries of the world. The experience of the Asian tigers is a case in point!



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## **20. Sociopragmatic Significance of ‘Sound and Fury’ in the Nigerian Political Context**

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*“Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.”*  
W. Shakespeare *Macbeth* Act 5, scene 5.

This paper examines the sociopragmatic implications of Shakespearean ‘sound and fury’ for the Nigerian polity. Specifically, it seeks sociopragmatic relevance for abstract phonetic and phonological concepts in accounting for sociopolitical issues in Nigeria. In this regard, it draws a parallelism between implosives and partisan implosion, and establishes the phonetic processes of *bi-anus* sounds as the building-blocks of linguistic farting (flatulence). From the theoretical perspective of sociopragmatics, the paper examines the locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary aspects of the selected speech acts which represent archetypical inflammatory utterances that are quite characteristic of some Nigerians united by the same thread of ideological fixation about the political leadership of the Nigerian state. The locutionary acts reveal a fierce struggle between the two groups who lay claims to the position of President as their exclusive birthright and failure to actualise this inordinate ambition is a good recipe for igniting the combustible tinder box that will blow up the Nigerian state. From the foregoing, it is evident that contrary to the ‘sound and fury’ story of life told by a Shakespearean idiot, which signifies nothing, the story of Nigeria’s ‘do-or-die’ politics is one that signifies partisan implosion and linguistic flatulence, all of which auspicate grave threat to the corporate existence of Nigeria as a sovereign state. To this effect, the paper calls for caution on the part of the politicians whose proclivity for linguistic and partisan indulgences predispose them to statements and actions that gnaw poignantly at the soul of Nigeria.

### **1. Introduction**

Life, in the Shakespearean sense, is like a story told by an idiot, which is full of sound and fury but signifies nothing. In contrast, the story of Nigerian politics is one of sound and fury, which has all the propensity of strapping the country on the cliff of self-destruction. Given that this volume is intended to celebrate one of Nigeria’s renowned phonologists, whose first love as a linguist has been to account for sounds of languages, it would be interesting to explore the extent to which the abstract phonological characterization of language bears relevance to the social functions of language. In phonetics and phonology, the analyst seeks to account for the articulatory, acoustic and auditory features of all discernible sound segments and determine those that are meaningful in specific languages. In socio-

pragmatics, the primary preoccupation is with accounting for the ways conditions of language use derive from the social situations. In this regard, the analyst notes Agbede et al. (2013), determines the functions, which language serves in the expression of ‘content’ or what Brown and Yule (1983) refer to as *transactional* and the functions which language serves in expressing social relations and personal attitudes, which they term *interactional*.

In this paper, we seek to simulate a mutual interface between the asocial characterization of the sound level of language and the social underpinning of language in practical contexts. In specific terms, the paper leans on the instrumentality of metaphorical extension to explore the sociopragmatic relevance of certain phonetic units in appraising the current sociopolitical situation in Nigeria. To this effect, it draws a parallelism between implosives and partisan implosion, and establishes the phonetic processes of *bi-anus* sounds as the building-blocks of linguistic farting/flatulence all of which auspicate grave threat to the corporate existence of the Nigerian nation of nations. As a build-up to the 2015 general elections garners momentum, the value of this sociopragmatic inquiry derives from its emphasis on the need for Nigerians to exert moderating influence on their incendiary propensities and spare the country the unsavoury luxury of verging on the precipice of doom.

## **2. Conceptual Framework**

The study utilises the following operative concepts, which would be applied in the strictly technical senses in discussing the subject-matter – implosives, bi-anus sounds, linguistic farting/flatulence.

### **2.1 Implosives**

Implosives are sound segments that are mostly stops and rarely affricates, which as Ball & Müller (2005) observe, are produced with a mixed glottalic ingressive and pulmonic egressive airstream mechanism. In essence, the airstream is controlled by moving the glottis downward in addition to expelling air from the lungs. Unlike the purely glottalic ejective consonants, implosives can be modified by phonation, which is almost universally voiced. Yet, it needs to be pointed out that in the articulation of implosives; the airstream mechanism can originate from three principal sources – glottis (glottalic airstream), velum (velaric airstream) and lungs (pulmonic airstream mechanism). Ian (2008) argues that implosives are phonemic in approximately 13% of the world's languages.

The IPA chart represents implosives by modifying the top of a letter (voiced stop) with a downward-facing hook thus: ⟨b ɗ ɟ ɠ ɗ̥⟩. The essential difference between the normal plosives, (attested in virtually all languages) and implosives is that in the articulation of the former, the direction of airflow is egressive while the latter involves inward direction of airflow. Taking in air in this manner means to ‘implode’ a sound. In other words, implosives involve sucking of air into the mouth and utilization of the air trapped in the orifice, velum, or glottis for the articulation of different types of implosives. The attested voiced implosive stops are: voiced bilabial [b], voiced dental [ɗ], voiced dental [ɟ], voiced retroflex [ɗ̣], voiced palatal [ɟ̟], voiced velar [ɠ], voiced uvular [ɗ̥], voiceless bilabial [p̚], voiceless

alveolar [ɖ], voiceless palatal [ɟ̊], voiceless velar implosive [ɠ̊], voiceless uvular implosive [ʁ̊].

Implosives are widespread among the language of Sub-Saharan African and Southeast Asia, and are found in a few languages of the Amazon Basin. They are rarely reported elsewhere, but do occur in scattered languages such as the Mayan languages in North America and Sindhi in the Indian subcontinent. Sindhi has an unusually large number of contrastive implosives, with /ɓ ɗ ɠ ɡ/. Although Sindhi has a dental-retroflex distinction in its plosives, with /b d ɖ ʄ g/, this contrast is neutralized in the implosives. A contrastive retroflex implosive /ɖ/ may however occur in Ngad'a, a language spoken in Flores, Indonesia. Although rare, voiceless implosives are found in such languages as the Owere dialect of Igbo in Nigeria (/ɓ̥/ /t̥/), Krongo in Sudan, the Uzere dialect of Isoko, the closely related Lendu and Ngiti languages in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Serer in Senegal (/ɓ̥ ʈ ʞ/), and some dialects of the Poqomchi' and Quiche languages in Guatemala (/ɓ̥ ʈ/). Owere Igbo has a seven-way contrast among bilabial stops, /p<sup>h</sup> p ɓ b<sup>h</sup> b ɓ m/, and its alveolar stops are similar.

## 2.2 Bi-anusal Sounds

The term, *bi-anusal* is coined in this paper specifically to account for a peculiar phonetic feature, which has not been attested in literature. In phonetics, all efforts are geared towards accounting for all discernible sound segments, which human beings can produce, using the 'organs of speech'. Incidentally, these organs of speech, which are used in strictly technical sense to refer to the organs enclosed in the oral and nasal cavities, exclude other parts of the body that could equally be used to produce sounds. There are other such bodily functions as hiccups, belch, sneezes, coughs, farts, footsteps, claps, sucking and kissing sounds, which do not fall within the purview of phonetics (and therefore do not have phonetic terminology) but which communicate almost as eloquently as speech does. One of such bodily functions is farting. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines the transitive verb form of fart as 'to send forth as wind from the anus.' The word comes from the Old English 'feortan' (meaning 'to break wind').

Although the word is 'not in decent use,' as noted by OED, it was used by the likes of the great English poet, Geoffrey Chaucer. Farting is a reflex action of expelling intestinal gas through the anus, especially an audible one. *Thesaurus Legend* describes the automatic instinctive unlearned reaction to a stimulus variously as inborn, innate, instinctive reflex, physiological reaction, reflex action, reflex response, and unconditioned reflex.

In phonetic terms, the reflexive discharge of intestinal gas (also known as flatulence) or flatus (in medical terms) can be described articulatorily as voiced bi-anusal plosive or fricative. It is voiced because the two fibrous lobes of anus which draw together to form a total occlusion vibrate when the abdominal egressive airstream mechanism is expelled. It is a plosive sound if the manner of articulation is complete and air release is sudden with a resounding plosion, that is, the terminal forced release of pressure built up during the occlusive phase of a stop consonant. The reflexive discharge of flatus can be fricative if the manner of articulation is partial and air release is gradual. It can equally be an affricate if



there is total occlusion and gradual release of flatus. Either way, the sounds produced through these articulatory processes are human sounds, which are communicative in nature but which have not attracted the attention of phoneticians, perhaps for not being in conformity with the conventional speech mechanism. Nonetheless, this peculiar phonetic process is central to the subject-matter being discussed in this paper as we try to examine it from the point of view of Nigeria's sociopolitical context.

Farting or flatulence is normal biological process like breathing, sweating or burping. Everybody farts, even those who seem not to. The average human, according the National Health Service, United Kingdom, breaks wind approximately 15 times daily. When we eat, drink or swallow saliva, we equally swallow tiny amounts of air. This swallowed air accumulates in the gut. The gas within our digestive system consists mainly of nitrogen and oxygen. When we digest food, gas mainly in form of hydrogen, methane and carbon dioxide is released. As the gas builds up, the body may need to get rid of it. This can be done either through burping (belching) or flatulence (farting). Many times, flatulence occurs and the person is unaware of it if there is no smell and the amount of gas is tiny. When there is a smell, there are usually small amounts of sulfuric gases. If food has not been digested properly, it begins to decompose, releasing sulfur.

There could be other underlying digestive dysfunctions, which lead to high frequency of release and foul-smelling sulfuric gas, serious health conditions like Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis or diverticulitis, and other causative factors such as antibiotics, laxatives, constipation, gastroenteritis. Foods that cause flatulence are generally those high in certain polysaccharides, particularly oligosaccharides, such as insulin, which belongs to a class of dietary fibres known as fructans. Examples include artichokes, beans, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cashew, cauliflower, dairy products, garlic, leeks, lentils, oats, onions, potatoes, radishes, rutabagas, scallions, sweet potatoes, turnips, wheat, yeast, etc.

Flatulence is commonly a source of laughter or embarrassment depending on the domain of occurrence. Excessive flatulence can cause enormous discomfort and distress, especially when the release is quite explosive in the midst of people. A bout of flatulence can strike at the most undesirable moments - during a ceremony or worse still, in a religious worship! Although farting can be unpleasant and embarrassing, the good news is that one can effectively control it; nonetheless, the bad news is that one will never be able to stop farting altogether. It is just a natural element of human digestive system that cannot be wished away. However, one can combat the 'insurgency' of flatulence by avoiding dietary habits, which lead to frequent release of flatus and foul-smelling sulfuric gas.

### **2.3 Linguistic Farting/Flatulence**

Linguistic farting refers to inappropriate use of speech act (that is denotatively reckless, inflammatory, inciting or derogatory) intended to denigrate, defame, inflict face threatening act (FTA) on the social face of the addressee(s), or subvert civil authority. In Igbo, the vulgar expression – *inya nsị n'ọ̀nụ* – 'passing feces through the mouth' or 'oral defecation' is a metaphoric depiction of inappropriate use of the language to achieve whatever communicative purpose. Just as the expulsion of sulfuric gas through the anus due to gastrointestinal dysfunction produces acrid odour, so does inappropriate use of language

cause riveting ripples that can snowball into roiling conflagration. It is in this sense that we shall apply the concept of linguistic flatulence in the discussion of the subject-matter.

### **3. Implosives and Partisan Implosion in Nigeria**

From the purely phonetic viewpoint, we have seen that implosives are a type of sound, whose articulatory process involves drawing in air technically referred to as airstream mechanism from three different sources. Implosion derives from the inrush of air in forming a suction stop. Here, we intend to extend the purely technical frontiers of the phonetician in accounting for this kind of human sound by alluding to a similar kinetic process in the realm of Nigerian partisan politics and its implications for the Nigerian state. Implosion in non-technical usage means sudden inward collapse. To implode therefore is to collapse a system. In mechanical terms, implosion is a process in which objects are destroyed by collapsing (or being squeezed in) on themselves. True implosion involves a difference between internal (lower) and external (higher) pressure, or inward and outward forces, that is so large that the structure collapses into itself. Examples of such mechanical implosion include nuclear weapons, fluid dynamics, astrophysics, controlled structure demolition, cathode ray tube and fluorescent lighting implosion.

In an implosion-type nuclear weapon design, a sphere of plutonium, uranium, or other fissile material is imploded by spherical arrangement of explosives charges. This decreases the material's volume and thus increases its density by a factor of two to four, causing it to reach critical mass and create a nuclear explosion. In general, the use of radiation to implode something, as in a hydrogen bomb or in laser-driven inertial confinement fusion, is known as radiation implosion. Also, there are building implosion, parabolic implosion in complex dynamics, which have been recorded in literature.

As in mechanical domain, so implosion is in the political terrain wherein counteracting partisan interests collide to countervail one another in an orgy of gravitational collapse. It is this scenario, which has been playing out in Nigeria's ruling party – Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) - that forms the thrust of analysis in this paper. PDP held a special national convention on 31 August, 2013 at Abuja. In his speech at the convention, President Goodluck Jonathan expressed strong optimism about the growing strength of the 'largest party in Africa'. His words:

... Of the three political parties registered in 1998, only the PDP has retained its singular identity and core vision as a political movement till date. While others have imploded along the way or subsumed their identity in search of political direction and relevance, the PDP has remained a strong fortress of hope for our people.

Unfortunately, the ugly scenario of a walk-out staged by a faction of PDP led by Alhaji Kawu Baraje, which played out at the self-acclaimed behemoth's special convention marked the official implosion in the Party and invested Mr. President's speech with ironic and paradoxical togas. Oparah (2013) captured the situation in PDP thus: "From all possible indices, the umbrella which had rather excelled in shielding Nigeria from positive impacts of democracy is torn into shreds. The bevy of unethical and immoral Nigerians that have

always converged under that rickety umbrella are in a free fight. PDP is set on an irreversible path of self-destruction. It's presently being assailed by pangs of self-immolation..."



All in all, the medications of greed and intimidation with which the PDP had been guarding its flanks had failed and the disparate tendencies that converged in the party as a nest for meeting their base desires are going their separate ways. As Claver posits, "it is just natural that the many contradictions and indecent flaps in PDP will seek out the party and rip it to the seams so as to free Nigerians from its vice grip. That is what is happening at present as the party and its members battle with their lives to contain the present wave of factionalization, insurrection and widespread schism."

#### **4. Linguistic Flatulence in Nigeria**

In this section, we seek to characterise the 'sound and fury' of the Nigerian political class as a typical evidence of linguistic flatulence, which signifies base proclivities that gnaw at the soul of the Nigerian state. A sample of such incendiary speech acts elicited from the Nigerian newspapers will be examined.

##### **Major General Muhammadu Buhari**

(i) "There may be no Nigeria. I draw parallel with Somalia so many times (Somalisation of Nigeria). I am scared about that..." (Buhari predicting 2011 polls in an interview with *Daily Sun* newspaper [www.sunnewsonline.net](http://www.sunnewsonline.net) Sunday, 8 August 2010)

(ii) 'Lynch anyone who rigged the election'. (During his CPC campaign rally in Minna, Niger State, April 2011)

(iii). "God willing by 2015, something will happen. They either conduct a free and fair election or they go a very disgraceful way. If what happened in 2011 should happen again in 2015, by the grace of God, the dog and the baboon would all be soaked in blood." ('Nigeria: 2015 Will Be Bloody If – Buhari' By Luka Binniyat, [www.vanguardngr.com](http://www.vanguardngr.com) 15 May 2012)

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**Alhaji Mujahi Asari Dokubo**

(i) “Not only that there will be no peace in the Niger-Delta, there will be no peace everywhere across the country. If it is war the North wants, we are ready for them because President must complete the mandatory constitutionally-allowable two terms of eight years or the militants will make Nigeria ungovernable.” (There will be bloodshed if Jonathan loses in 2015, says Asari-Dokubo’ by Bassey Udo September 9, 2013 [www.premiumtimesng.com](http://www.premiumtimesng.com))

**Atiku Abubakar**

“Those who make peaceful change impossible will make violent change inevitable”. (‘My ambition is legitimate – Atiku’ Emmanuel Aziken, & Dapo Akinrefon - <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/05/ambition-legitimate-atiku/#sthash.lh5THUHO.dpuf> 2 May 2015)

**Kingsley Kuku**

(i) “If President GEJ is not re-elected in 2015, the tenuous peace now being enjoyed in the Niger-Delta will not be guaranteed.” (‘Reps, Niger gov want Dokubo-Asari, Kuku arrested’ **May 8, 2013** by John Ameh, Fidelis Soriwei, and Enyioha Opara [www.punchng.com](http://www.punchng.com))

**Dr. Junaid Mohammed:**

(i). “Quote me, if Jonathan insists on running, there will be bloodshed and those who feel short-changed may take the warpath and the country may not be the same again...So, there will be bloodshed. But we don’t pray to get to that level, before his ethnic and tribal advisers pull him back...Blood will flow if President Jonathan should contest in 2015...Nigeria should be ready for war.” (‘2015: There’ll be bloodshed, if Jonathan runs, warns Junaid Mohammed’ by Ismail Omipidan ([www.sunnewsonline.com](http://www.sunnewsonline.com) 01 December, 2013)

(ii). “OBJ lied, Jonathan sinned and Sanusi is just a talkative boy” ([www.sunnewsonline.com](http://www.sunnewsonline.com) 30 September, 2012)

**Chukwuemeka Ezeife**

“Stopping Jonathan in 2015 will have grave consequences. Everybody can make noise but if those who are making noise should think deeply, they should realize that the continued existence of Nigeria as one country is anchored on Jonathan’s continuation in office come 2015.” (They’ve made Nigeria ungovernable for Jonathan – Ezeife: (<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2013/05/theyve-made-nigeria-ungovernable-for-jonathan-ezeife/#sthash.bHnd8d3M.dpuf> 20 May, 2013)

**Mallam Nasir el-Rufai:**

‘There would be violence in the 2015 elections and the only way to take power is by force’. (SSS storms el-Rufai’s Abuja house to arrest him’ **January 24, 2014** by Adelani Adepegba [www.punchng.com](http://www.punchng.com))



**Bisi Akande:**

“Jonathan is a kindergarten president’. What the country needs is a thinking leader not a kindergarten president with no solution to the myriad of problems plaguing the nation.” (‘My problem with Jonathan, PDP, by Bisi Akande’ - Gbenga Olarinoye [www.vanguardngr.com](http://www.vanguardngr.com) 18 August, 2013)

**Chief Olusegun Obasanjo:**

Allegation of keeping over 1,000 people on political watch list rather than criminal or security watch list and training snipers and other armed personnel secretly and clandestinely acquiring weapons to match for political purposes like Abacha, and training them where Abacha trained his own killers, if it is true, cannot augur well for the initiator, the government and the people of Nigeria. Obasanjo's letter to Jonathan: BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE ([www.thisdaylive.com](http://www.thisdaylive.com) 23 December, 2013)

**Alhaji Muktar Nyako**

... the present Federal administration has now become a government of impunity run by an evil-minded leadership for the advancement of corruption...using its mass murderers/cut-throats imbedded in our legitimate and traditional Defence and Security organisations... Cases of mass murders by its bloody minded killers and cut-throats are well known, but it attributes the killings to so-called Boko-Haram... (‘Governor Nyako accuses Jonathan administration of genocide against Northern Nigeria’. Sani Tukur [www.premiumtimes.ng.com](http://www.premiumtimes.ng.com) 19 April, 2014.

**President Goodluck Jonathan**

(i) “Nigerian politicians are tiny men.” (Nigerian politicians lack virtues of great men – President’ Olalekan Adetoye [www.punchng.com](http://www.punchng.com) 13 December, 2013)

**5. Sociopragmatic Analysis of Linguistic Flatulence**

Sociopragmatic method of analysing language use is tangentially connected to the concept of ‘speech act’ enunciated by J. L. Austin (1962). Speech Act Theory (SAT) analyses the role of utterances in relation to the behavior of speakers and hearers in interpersonal communication. It is a communicative activity defined with reference to the intentions of the speaker while speaking (or the illocutionary force of his utterances). Austin’s SAT posits that the action performed when an utterance is produced can be analysed on three different levels. It distinguishes the act *of* saying something, what one does *in* saying it, and what one does *by* saying it, and dubs these the ‘locutionary’, the ‘illocutionary’ and the ‘perlocutionary’ act, respectively. In essence, SAT explores the power of words, which has been variously expressed by scholars. In *Crave the Moon*, Lori Handeland notes, “Words have power. Words begin and end wars. They create and destroy families. They break hearts. They heal them. If you have the right words, there’s nothing on earth you can’t do”. “Words, as Nora Roberts observes, “have magic. Spells and curses. Some of them, the best of them, once said change everything.”



In all the speech acts performed by the speakers, it is clearly evident what are said, the form of the words uttered, that is the act of saying certain things (locutionary act); what the speakers are doing with their words, the function of the words, and the specific purpose that the speakers have in mind (illocutionary force) and what effects are achieved by the use of such words (perlocutionary effect). The speech acts listed above represent archetypical inflammatory utterances that are quite characteristic of some Nigerians united by the same thread of ideological fixation about the political leadership of the Nigerian state. This thread springs out into two ideological opposition defined by the traditional default lines of partisanship, north-south dichotomy and ethno-linguistic and religious biases.

The foregoing locutionary acts reveal a fierce struggle between the two groups who lay claims to the position of President as their exclusive birthright and failure to actualise this inordinate ambition is a good recipe for igniting the combustible tinder box that will blow the Nigerian state into atomistic pulps and smithereens. As Kolawole (2014) observed, "Junaid Mohammed has said it. Asari Dokubo has said it. There will be sorrow, tears and blood if their part of the country does not produce the winner of 2015 presidential election. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Junaid, in Kolawole's opinion represents the thinking in some quarters that Jonathan has usurped power and denied the North its slot. The best way to stop him is to intimidate him out of the race and threaten his supporters. On the other hand, Dokubo represents the thinking that Jonathan is being treated with contempt because he is a minority and they believe that they owe it a duty to protect him with whatever is at their disposal.

For those who have invested materially and emotionally in the Jonathan presidency, the only condition for guaranteeing the continued corporate existence of Nigeria is the re-election of Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan in 2015. This iron belligerency is amply counterpoised by the opposing group's unshakable faith in a northern presidency, an unmitigated commitment to the reclamation of power lost by default of Yar'Adua's demise in 2010 - a project that must be executed with a triumphal sense of fatalism. This incendiary disposition, which defines the groups' mindset (illocutionary act), receives robust expressions that exert ripple effects (perlocutionary act) on their hearers. Diane Setterfield explored the magical properties of words: "There is something about words. In expert hands, manipulated deftly, they take you prisoner. Wind themselves around your limbs like spider silk, and when you are so enthralled you cannot move, they pierce your skin, enter your blood, numb your thoughts. Inside you they work their magic." For Jodi Picout, "words are like eggs dropped from great heights; you can no more call them back than ignore the mess they leave behind when they fall".

In an interview he granted the *Daily Sun* (Sunday, 8 August 2010) Major-General Muhammadu Buhari (presidential candidate of Congress for Progressive Change, CPC) predicted the outbreak of violence if the 2011 general elections were perceived to be far from free and fair. In the interview, Buhari was asked: "Do you fear for the country that if we don't get it right now...?" The interviewer did not complete the question before Buhari interjected, "There may be no Nigeria..., because I draw parallel with Somalia so many times. Somalisation of Nigeria; I am scared of that". On 17 April, 2011, violent demonstrations exploded in parts of the north as ill-mannered youths expressed outrage over

the defeat of the presidential candidate of the CPC, Muhammadu Buhari. According to Agbede (2013), in spite of the popular acclaim, which the elections drew from local and international observers, violence erupted spontaneously in some parts of the north shortly after collation of the results of the presidential election commenced. This followed an allegation of rigging leveled against the ruling PDP by the CPC presidential candidate, General Buhari. While addressing journalists after casting his vote in Daura, Katsina State, the CPC flag-bearer specifically alleged the airlift of thumb-printed ballot papers across the country casting the credibility of the presidential election results in doubt. General Buhari ended with a terse challenge to the youths, urging them to wake up to their responsibility as young people and major stakeholders in the Nigerian project of ensuring that every election was free and fair.

Expectedly, the youths braced to the ‘lynch anyone who rigged the election’ challenge thrown by ‘Sai Buhari’ as they went on rampage, killing people and destroying property worth billions of naira. The Sheikh Ahmed Lemu-led Presidential Committee on Post-Election Violence in parts of the country, in its report noted that CPC, presidential candidate, Major-General Muhammadu Buhari’s provocative remarks played a role in the bloody violence that led to the death of 10 NYSC members and hundreds of other after April presidential polls. Toeing the same line of inferential logic, Omipidan & Muhammad (2011) posit that the crisis, which ensued even before a winner was declared, would not have come to them as a surprise for those who followed Buhari’s campaigns, especially in the north. From the onset, according to them, the CPC supporters in the North were made to believe that Buhari was good to win the race, with or without political alliance. And that anything to the contrary, would mean that Buhari was “rigged” out.

Although the dust raised by the post-election violence had settled with the concomitant needless loss of lives and property, the rise of Boko Haram insurgency and the murderous dimension it gained soon after Goodluck Jonathan was inaugurated as the President is perceived in some quarters as tangentially connected to Buhari’s threat to make Nigeria ungovernable if he failed in his bid to clinch the presidency. His stance tallied with the Adamu Ciroma-led Northern Political Leaders Forum (NPLF), which opposed Jonathan’s election in favour of a northern consensus presidential candidate within the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and which was rightly or wrongly quoted as saying that should Jonathan take the slot meant for the North, the country would be made ungovernable for him. Alhaji Lawal Kaita added his voice to the agitation for power shift to the North in 2011 when he threatened:

The North is determined, if it happens, to make the country ungovernable for President Jonathan or any other Southerner who finds his way to the seat of power on the platform of the PDP against the principle of the Party’s zoning policy. Anything short of a Northerner is tantamount to stealing our presidency. Jonathan has to go and he will go. Even if he uses incumbency power to get his nomination on the platform of the PDP, he would be frustrated out.

Buhari's alleged fraternity with the Islamic sect was heightened when a faction of Boko Haram led by Abu Mohammed Ibn Abdulaziz named him among other five Nigerians – Shettima Monguno, Bukar Ibrahim, Gaji Galtimari, Aisha Wakil, Alkali Wakil – as 'trusted' Nigerians it would be ready to negotiate with in Saudi Arabia. (cf. 'Boko Haram wants talks...picks Buhari as mediator, Saudi Arabia venue...demands ex-gov's arrest, compensation.' [www.punchng.com](http://www.punchng.com) 2 November, 2012; 'Boko Haram names Buhari, five others as mediators' posted by Emmanuel Aziken, Ben Agande & Ndahi Marama [www.vanguardngr.com](http://www.vanguardngr.com) 01 November, 2012)

Even as Nigeria struggles to combat the Boko Haram insurgency that has claimed over six thousand lives, Buhari went ahead to issue another threat of Armageddon that was certain to befall Nigeria if the 2015 polls were rigged again. Since Buhari and NPLF plucked the discordant tune of 'anarchy' 'war' and 'bloodshed,' other ethnic jingoists on both sides of the ideological divide had latched on sentimental bellicosity to recite the 'by fire by force' war mantras as a choric refrain. A caller to the Radio Nigeria programme, 'Politics', Sheikh Abdulkadir Ahmed from Kebbi State stated that the only condition for the Boko Haram insurgency to stop is for people from the north only to contest for the office of the President in the 2015 presidential elections, adding that if it is certified and assured that it is only northerners that will contest for the office of the President, peace will return to Nigeria. The list of the most assured candidates as announced by Sheikh Ahmed is (1) PDP Rabiu Kwankwaso, (2) APC Alhaji Muhammadu Buhari, (3) PDM Alhaji Abubakar Atiku, (5) VOP Alhaji Sule Lamido. This is the only concession that will stop Boko Haram's killings and political chaos in Nigeria

Queuing up behind Buhari are Mohammed Junaid and El-Rufai whose 'by fire by force' stratagem for reclaiming the north's lost power birthright take on the wings of linguistic flatulence, which not only pollutes the nation's political airspace but drags the polity down the jagged precipice of self-destruction. Of course, the linguistic farting of Dokubo and his pack of ethnic champions and opportunistic sympathizers that represents a counter-force to the thinking of the north is no less in its odoriferous intensity and destabilizing tendency.

The perlocutionary effect of linguistic flatulence on the hearers has generated interests, which have been variously expressed. For instance, the Arewa Youth Forum, according to Umoru (2012), slammed the former Military Head of State and 2011 Presidential candidate of Congress for Progressive Change, CPC, Major-General Muhammadu Buhari over his prediction of a bloody revolution if 2015 election is rigged. The youths in a statement described General Buhari's outbursts as misguided, treasonable and uncalled for. This calls to mind the historical event of John Bull's treasonable action of emitting an explosive bout of flatulence at a poster of George III as an outraged William Pitt the Younger ticked him off.



The flatulence humour as graphically etched above by Newton clearly underscores Bisi Akande's opposition politics, which informed his depiction of Dr. Goodluck Jonathan as a 'kindergarten President'. Remarks of such derogatory and inflammatory nature have compelled the State Security Services to issue a terse statement through its Deputy Director of Public Relations, Marilyn Ogar on Thursday 23 January 2014:

The attention of DSS has been drawn to incessant provocative statements by some Nigerians threatening violence ahead of the 2015 general elections. Such comments are offensive, misguided, and directed at stirring hate among Nigerians. We therefore warn all subversive elements that are bent on promoting divisive and disruptive agenda to desist from such, as the full weight of the law shall henceforth be brought to bear accordingly

The Department of State Services followed up its warning with action as it invited Mallam el-Rufai, Asari Dokubo and Junaid Mohammed at different times to its Abuja headquarters where they were grilled and a commitment to refrain from such provocative statements in future squeezed out of them. But the ring of belligerency that characterised Dokubo's defiant disposition hardly makes the ominous security situation less intractable. His words:

I'm here to honour DSS invitation, I don't know if it is arrest. I'm not afraid of arrest, and have never been. Arrest is part of the dividend of the struggle. I have been arrested 73 times; today's arrest will be making it the 74<sup>th</sup> time. I'm going into DSS headquarters with my prayer mat, my Koran, tisbih, toilet bag, which contains my toothpaste, toothbrush. I'm also here with my drugs. I am fully prepared, if the DSS decides to arrest me, I'm ready to stay.

Also, the Senate President, David Mark expressed displeasure at such reckless utterances that heat up the polity:



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It is disheartening that even though the general elections of 2015 are some years away, political jobbers, sycophants and hustlers have prematurely seized the political space and are being allowed to set the tone of national discourse...They employ every weapon, including threats of war, and open saber rattling, to advance their partisan causes... Beating the drums of war, chanting war songs and blackmailing the nation with fire and brimstone are outdated and unacceptable tools of political brinksmanship...To sponsor or promote violence, destruction, and uncharitable utterances in the name of politics or religion is totally unacceptable and must be condemned in the strongest term in words and deeds...

In the same vein, the Chairman of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Attahiru Jega advised politicians to guard against utterances that can trigger violence as the 2015 elections are gathering momentum. (cf. 'Jega cautions politicians against unguarded utterances' [www.punchng.com](http://www.punchng.com) 11 February, 2014). According to the *Punch* report, Jega made the call at a forum on 2015 elections' coverage organized by the National Broadcasting Commission in Abuja. His words: "The attitude of political class is one of our biggest challenges in INEC. Politicians have a responsibility to change their behaviour to stop overheating the polity." The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III added his voice to the call against politics of hatred and violence when the PDP national chairman, Alhaji Adamu Mu'azu paid him homage in his palace in Sokoto. According to Aminu (2014), the Sokoto monarch noted with dismay the politics of acrimony and mudslinging in the polity and called on Mu'azu to do whatever it takes to bring stability to the polity, by ensuring that the road to 2015 elections is not stained with the blood of innocent citizens.

The deepening political crisis occasioned by such impassioned and intemperate language by some members of the political class has equally attracted comments in media political discourses. Simon Kolawole, a columnist with *Thisday* newspaper expresses his consternation and perturbation thus:

We describe democracy as 'one person, one vote,' but to the Junaids and the Dokubos, it is 'one man, one machete' and 'one man one gun'. It is either the candidate from their ethnic group wins or Nigeria will roast! All my life, I have never seen politics being played like this in Nigeria. Ethnic sentiments have never been this blatant and unrefined. This is one phase in our political evolution that I wish would pass very quickly...

All in all, the foregoing speech acts, insidious as they are baneful, easily pass as pernicious indexes of deepening ideological chasm and desperate quest for power currently ravaging the political landscape of the Nigerian state. The effortless ease and feline fluidity that tend to characterise this knack for linguistic flatulence betrays how little the war mongers appreciate the power of words. "Words," as Patrick Rothfuss avers, "are pale shadows of forgotten names. As names have power, words have power. Words can light the fire in the minds of men. Words can wring tears from the hardest hearts." Lisa Unger paints the



anguish and regret of a wrong user of language thus: “She wanted to take those words back. But they were out, shattering in the air around them, slicing them both.” To avoid such regrets, Alan Cohen warns, “Take care what words you speak that follow ‘I am’. In so speaking, you create your life.” If only the Junaids and Dokubos of the Nigerian world would hearken to Alan Cohen’s admonition and make conscious efforts to tame their unbridled appetite for linguistic farting, perhaps, Nigeria would be spared the suffocating and asphyxiating oddity of foul-air. They should go for speech acts that rather deodorize and freshen than those that pollute President Jonathan’s ‘breath of fresh air’.

## **Conclusion**

In this paper, we explored the applicability of abstract phonetic concepts in examining issues of sociopragmatic relevance to the contemporary political life of the Nigerian state. Contrary to the ‘sound and fury’ story of life told by a Shakespearean idiot, which signifies nothing, the story of Nigeria’s ‘do-or-die’ politics is one of sound and fury that signifies partisan implosion and flatulence, which provides a good recipe for dismembering Nigeria as a sovereign state. The partisan implosion, which enveloped the ruling Peoples’ Democratic Party (PDP) shares basic features with mechanical implosion in fluid dynamics, astrophysics, and cathode ray tubes. In fluid dynamics, for instance, cavitation involves an implosion process. When a cavitation bubble forms in a liquid (e.g. by a high-speed water), this bubble is typically rapidly collapsed – imploded – by the surrounding liquid. The threat of partisan implosion began to tug PDP in the face when the umbrella became too small to accommodate the divergent interests of the strange bedfellows. Even the weird promise of patronage for members by the former national chairman, Alhaji Bamanga Tukur did not save the Party from the gruesome kiss of implosion. According to Sanusi (2013), Tukur betrayed the fears and desperation of the ruling party’s leadership with his disreputable panacea on keeping the party united ahead of the 2015 elections when he said: “PDP is all about patronage. We are going to dole out our patronage to all our members who remain in the party... We are going to give patronage to all our members who have contested elections and lost. There is enough in the party to go round everyone. There is no need to leave the party.”

In astrophysics, implosion is a key part of the gravitational collapse of large stars, which can lead to the creation of supernovae, neutron stars and black holes. In the case of PDP, the implosion led to factionalisation, from which emerged a new Party in the name of New PDP (nPDP). For cathode ray tubes where a high vacuum exists, a dangerous implosion occurs when the outer glass envelope is damaged. As a result of the power of the implosion, glass pieces explode outwards at dangerous velocities. The new Party that emerged from the fading shadows of PDP took further step by merging with the All Peoples Congress (APC), thus leading to the defection of five PDP governors and thirty-seven House of Representatives members to the APC. All these were signs of fratricidal tendencies in the party strong enough to make the waxing opposition pull the rug from under the feet of the PDP. In a bid to advance this desperate quest to wrest power from the ruling party, the gangling opposition appropriated linguistic farting as a weapon, but which the ruling party repelled with countervailing vigour and intensity.

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In the course of examining the issues, we were challenged by the need to capture the communicative import of farting as a linguistic behaviour of man in phonetic terms. Although we offered *bi-anusal* sound as a tentative articulatory term for such sounds, which derive from gastrointestinal and muscular mechanisms, we recommend the challenge to phoneticians and phonologists, perhaps, for a more accurate theoretical and descriptive account and terminological exactitude. In the meantime, the paper has sought social relevance for phonetic and phonological theorisations. To this effect, it made efforts to establish a connection between implosive sounds and partisan implosion on the one hand and *bi-anusal* sounds and linguistic farting on the other. Given the underlying digestive dysfunction as causative factors of flatulence, and in the light of the deleterious effects of partisan implosion on the sociopolitical health of the Nigerian state, the paper calls for restraints and caution on the part of the politicians, whose proclivity for linguistic and partisan indulgences predispose them to statements and actions that gnaw poignantly at the soul of Nigeria.

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## **21. Linguistic Communication Pitfalls**

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The world in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century exists as a global village where people and governments are engaged in conversation through language use. Conversation in the forms of talks and verbal negotiations has proved more effective in Angola, the Apartheid South Africa and recently in the Niger Delta of Nigeria, than any other means of conflict resolution. The world is in search of global peace, not by arms race anymore, but by communication through language use. Summits and conferences are held by heads of government to promote world peace and security. Language use has remained the only useful means of attaining this desire. By a simple random sampling of selected conversations in the book of Saint John of *The Holy Bible*, the interlocutors' adherence to, or their violation of the maxims of the Cooperative Principle are investigated. It is revealed that adherence to the maxims are not only significant, but their violation have crucial impact on communication.

### **0. Introduction**

Communication is the essence of living, and as such human beings engage daily in it by language use. This paper observes that language, which is human articulation of meaning-laden speech sounds, is indispensable to efficient communication. Language use or linguistic communication functions between interlocutors who acknowledge its efficiency to secure effective and purpose-driven interaction. This paper submits to Adegbija (1999:86) who states that 'human beings daily engage in interactional talk or conversation... it is difficult to conceive of effective functioning in any human society without interactional talk'. However, linguistic communication does guarantee effective functioning in the society only when certain norms of linguistic interaction are observed. These norms refer to what Grice in Levinson (1985:101-102) labelled the maxims of Cooperative Principle. One wonders what the possible effects of the non-observance of these norms could be, and to unravel this is the pursuit of this paper as it examines how linguistic communication is performed among some interlocutors in the book of Saint John of *The Holy Bible*. The findings will impact positively on the practice of linguistic communication and ultimately make human relations, as well as the society function much better.

### **1. Literature Review**

#### **1.1 Grice's Theory of Co-operative Principle**

Grice's theory (op. cit.), describes how people interact and behave in conversation with one another. Both the speaker and the hearer are involved in a kind of co-operation in the

sense that the speakers observe the principle while the listeners assume that the speakers are actually observing it. The assumption that both the speaker and the hearers are observing the Co-operative Principle is said to give room to implicature.

The Co-operative Principle and its accompanying maxims explain how non-literal utterances in conversation can be understood. The Principle with its maxims enables Grice to explain that conversational participants do convey meanings beyond what their utterances express when it is assumed that the Principle and its maxims are being observed in the course of their conversation. It is stated that the maxims may be adhered to, violated, opted out of, sacrificed one to another when they clash or overlap.

## **1.2 The Book of Saint John of *The Holy Bible***

The Book of Saint John of *The Holy Bible* provides data for this study. The source of data for this linguistic investigation is important and as such it is considered appropriate to examine it.

The Book of Saint John of *The Holy Bible* is one of the four Gospels which record the history of the life and time of Jesus Christ. The author of this book is believed to be John, the Apostle. Church father Irenaeus asserts that John published the Gospel while he was resident at Ephesus in Asia. Christian historical tradition states that this book was written in the later half of the first century A.D when Christianity had shifted from Jerusalem to the Aegean world.

The Book was probably written in Ephesus in present day Turkey, which had become the centre of Christianity in the East. According to history, it was written in Greek; indications to this fact are seen in its diction and vocabulary. A source affirms that there are about ninety words peculiar to this Book which are not found in any hagiographer.

It is different in style, language and context from the Books of Matthew, Mark and Luke of *The Holy Bible*. Its literary style is said to be noble, natural, artistically simple and that it 'combines in harmonious fashion the rustic speech of the synoptics with the urban phraseology of Saint Paul'. The narration which is highly theological chronicles events which took place in Judea and Jerusalem. The Hellenistic speech colouration of the first century is imbued with Hebrew in the narration.

The Book of Saint John opens with a philosophical prologue which identifies the Logos with Christ and introduces the themes of the Gospel. It proceeds to narrate the history of Jesus' public ministry from his introduction by John the Baptist to its close, the private life and activities of Jesus with his disciples, his sufferings and appearances after resurrection.

Few miracles performed by Jesus are narrated while attention is devoted to many of the discourse of Jesus, his conversations, teachings and disputations with his adversaries, especially the Sanhedrists at Jerusalem. These discourse provide the materials for this study and are therefore significant.

The unique characteristics of the Book, among others, are the clue it provides that Jesus' ministry lasted for not less than three years. There are no records of the temptation of Jesus and his transfiguration but there are accounts of a number of events in Jesus' life

which are not found in the synoptic Gospels. Briggs (1973:20) asserts that the importance of the Gospel of John is acknowledged in all quarters; it occupies a peculiar position within the New Testament canon and it is separated from the synoptic Gospels by certain basic differences.

Ngewa (2003) in Solomon (2012:70) states that: “the Gospel of John is the word of God to men and women of all periods of time”. This statement is significant because the current study will enrich people’s understanding of God’s word. It is certain that a good understanding of how language use can be effective, in addition to understanding better the gospel message in the data, will make the society function much better.

### 1.3 The Interlocutors

Two categories of conversationalists are identified in the Book of Saint John of *The Holy Bible*. The first interlocutor is Jesus Christ. He is variously addressed as Rabbi, Teacher, Master and Lord. Each of these forms of address reflects more than the attitude and reverence of the speaker for Jesus Christ.

In chapter one of the Book, Jesus Christ is presented to the public as the Incarnate Word of God who precedes the creative work of God for He exists with God right from the beginning. Jesus Christ is publicly declared by a revered Jewish religious figure, John the Baptist, as the Lamb of God and Simon Peter, one of his disciples assertively said of him thus, “... we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”. John 6:69. A leader of the Jews, one of the Pharisees calls him: “Rabbi... a teacher come from God...” John 3:2.

Similarly, Ridderbos (1997:255) remarks that: “Jesus was utterly different from, indeed other than, what Jews expected and desired of him - and... other than what human beings can conceive another human being to be”.

Perhaps the interlocutors of Jesus really could not cooperate with him in their conversations because of his unenviable social status. The Jews know his background as the son of Joseph the carpenter who is from Nazareth. Nathanael, like other Jews, does not believe something good, let alone a very important personality as Jesus claims himself to be, could come from Nazareth.

Certainly, there are indications that the Jews who are the interlocutors of Jesus are ambivalent in their perception and acknowledgement of the status of Jesus Christ. Some of the Jews while responding to Jesus’ assertion observe: ‘... Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?’ John 6:42. This indignation at Jesus partly accounts for the reason why some of this group of interlocutors fail to observe what Goffman (1967) in Solomon (2012:75), calls “face”. This set of the interlocutors of Jesus finds it difficult to show deference to him, thus affirming Ridderbos’ position.

The second category of conversationalists identified comprises three groups. The first are the common Jews such as the invalids, the destitute, the sick and the sinners. The second group in this category is made up of the religious, temple, and synagogue leaders while the third group is constituted by the disciples who are also known as the Apostles.

These represent the high and the low, the clergy and the laity, the helpless and the powerful as well as the influential Jews.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Population and Sampling Method

The Book of Saint John of *The Holy Bible*, King James Version has twenty-one chapters of eight hundred and thirty-nine verses. Fifty per cent of this population is selected for a pragmatic analysis. The sampling procedure adopted is the simple random in order to select a fair representation of the population so as to obtain some objective analysis of the population. Fifty per cent of the data which amounts to ten and a half chapters of four hundred and twenty-five verses are selected by simple random sampling method.

The simple random sampling of the twenty-one chapters of the Book of Saint John of *The Holy Bible*, King James Version is done by first dividing the entire Book into three segments:

Segment A which consists of chapters one to ten

Segment B which consists of chapters eleven to twenty

Segment C, which is made up of chapter twenty-one.

In Segment A, the odd number chapters: one, three, five, seven and nine are randomly selected, while in segment B the even number chapters: twelve, fourteen, sixteen, eighteen and twenty are chosen. In Segment C, each alternate verse in the sequence of one even, one odd number is randomly selected to approximately arrive at half of the chapter which is twelve verses out of twenty-five. By this random sampling procedure, a total of ten and a half chapters of four hundred and twenty-five verses are selected for analysis. This is approximately fifty per cent of the population. The King James version of *The Holy Bible* is chosen because of its literal translation of the Greek version.

### 2.2 Method of Analysis

The maxims of the Co-operative Principle are employed to investigate the extent to which the interlocutors adhere to the principle in their conversations. Each maxim that is observed by the interlocutor is ticked while those that are not adhered to are indicated with (X). These are serially numbered (See appendix) for easy reference.

### 2.3 Presentation

The appendix is an outlay of the maxims of the Cooperative Principle as either observed or unobserved by each of the interlocutors. For the purpose of this paper, the analysis is summarised in a table as presented below.

*The Distribution of Adherence to and Violation of the Maxims of the Cooperative Principle by Interlocutors*

| CP maxim  | Adherence | %    | Violation | %    |
|-----------|-----------|------|-----------|------|
| Quality   | 144       | 100  | 0         | 0    |
| Quantity  | 115       | 79.9 | 29        | 20.1 |
| Relevance | 139       | 96.5 | 5         | 3.5  |
| Manner    | 114       | 79.2 | 30        | 20.8 |

## 2.4 Discussion

As shown in the table above, the various interlocutors in the data for this study observe the maxim of quality and the maxim of relevance significantly. The total sum of turn-takings identified in the conversations is one hundred and forty-four. These are analysed using the maxims of the Cooperative Principle so as to discover whether the interlocutors adhere to, or violate the maxims, the extent to which they do in each of their turn-takings in the conversations as well as to ascertain their effects on linguistic communication.

As presented in the table; the various interlocutors in the data for this study observe the maxim of quality 100%. The interlocutors utter locutions that are true and consistent with the knowledge available to them. Each locution represents the thought, view and perception of the speaker; there is no locution that is uttered which does not reflect the feeling or intention of the interlocutor. The quality of every locution can hardly be contested. To substantiate this, Jesus' response in John 7: 6 to His brothers who cajole Him to go up to the feast of tabernacles represents His intention. He informs them that it is not yet time for Him to proceed to the feast at Judea but they who are ready can go. Jesus later departs Galilee to attend the feast after His brothers have gone for a while.

Similarly, the locution of Nicodemus in John 3:2 to Jesus is consistent with Nicodemus' conviction regarding the divine status of Jesus. Nicodemus defends his conviction much later in John 7:50-51 at the hasty trial which the displeased and aggrieved Jews intend to subject Jesus to. In addition, Pilate in John 18:38, after he has tried Jesus declares to His accusers: 'I find in him no fault at all.' Pilate acquits Jesus for His innocence of any crime. This also reflects his conviction and sincerity. Consequently, he seeks to set Jesus free.

The locutions that are identified also conform, very significantly, to the maxim of relevance. The interlocutors make locutions which are relevant, as each of them contributes to every conversation the interactants engage in. This signifies that the issues which the conversationalists converse on are of interest to them, and so every interlocutor has certain idea, perception, feeling and opinion to share with the listener. As a result, none of the conversations end abruptly.

Thus, the interlocutors adhere to the maxim of relevance by 96.5%. This remarkable adherence indicates the level of cooperation that exists between the interlocutors. The interlocutors demonstrate the desire to communicate; they do so and their turn-takings are closely related. The relevance of each locution to the current conversation holding among the interlocutors indicates the genuineness of the intention



of the interlocutors to communicate. It is however observed that interlocutors opt out of the maxim of relevance on five occasions. This they do when they desire to change the current topic of a particular conversation to something else.

For instance, Jesus in John 3:3 seeks to change the topic of the conversation which Nicodemus initiates regarding his admiration and commendation both for Jesus and the spectacular miracles He performs. So, in His turn, He introduces the concept of 'born-again' as the pre-condition for entering into the kingdom of God.

Likewise, John opts out of the maxim of relevance in John 1: 26 as he endeavours to shift the attention of the Jews away from himself to the Christ they are eagerly expecting when he informs them that: '... there standeth one among you... whose latchet I am not worthy to unloose.' It is observed that this contribution of John is not a relevant answer to the Jews' question: 'who art thou? ...' John 1: 22

Furthermore, interlocutors observe the maxim of quantity by 79.9%. This significant percentage of adherence is an indication of the exquisite conversations which the interlocutors engage in. It is a demonstration of the fact that the background knowledge of the interlocutors on the issue(s) at hand is robust and so the interlocutors are able to make contributions, which are informative as required, to the immediate purpose of the conversation.

Philip informs Nathanael that he and some other Jews have found Jesus of Nazareth of whom Moses and the prophets have foretold previously. Philip, in breaking this news to Nathanael states that not only him, but some other Jews have equally seen the Jesus of Nazareth. He also alludes to these prominent authorities that the Jews hold in high esteem purposely to convince the cynic that Nathanael is. Promptly Nathanael lives up to his cynicism as he replies: 'Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?' Philip, relying still on his background knowledge about Nathanael decides that the best way to convince him is to invite Nathanael to see Jesus. Philip then requests Nathanael to 'come and see'.

Furthermore, Jesus, relying on His background knowledge of Nathanael as well, exclaims: 'Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile'. Nathanael who is perturbed on hearing this from Jesus he is meeting for the first time, wonders how Jesus knows him. Nathanael's cynicism disappears when Jesus reveals to him that he has been under a fig tree before Philip meets him. Notwithstanding, the interlocutors opt out of the maxim of quantity by 20.1%. This is done when the interlocutors intend to serve sundry purposes as stated earlier.

The adherence of the interlocutors to the maxim of manner is 79.2 %. Every interlocutor is orderly in his contribution to the conversation in which he participates. There is not a single instance of overlapping. Each interlocutor takes his turn as his listener stops speaking so that only one person or a group, as the case may be, speaks at a time.

As much as possible, the interlocutors avoid obscurity and ambiguity in their locutions. The impact of these on the conversations is that it lubricates easy exchange of information, ideas, and perceptions among the interlocutors. Thus, comprehension is greatly enhanced. This in turn keeps the conversations going among the interlocutors.

To showcase this, the conversation in John 1:19 between the Jews and John who is asked to disclose his identity to them produces five turn-takings. Similarly, the conversations which some interlocutors engage in upon the restoration of sight to the man who was born blind yield thirteen turn-takings. In this instance, the observance of the maxim of manner by each of the interlocutors greatly facilitates orderly turn-takings.

However, the maxim of manner is violated by the interlocutors by 20.8%. This happens when the interlocutors choose not to be brief in their contributions to the conversations. Jesus opts out of the maxim of manner on nine different occasions when He chooses not to be brief. He consistently does this in order to serve any purpose which suits Him. He throws brevity to the wind in order to convince, emphasis, re-assure, educate and inform His listener. At some other time, He opts out of the maxim to shift the topic of a conversation or change the issue at hand.

The Pharisees also do not adhere to the maxim of manner. There are instances in which they are not brief in their contributions. In one instance, their contribution shifts from response to indictment; at another, they upbraid the man who was born blind and also express their displeasure with some Jews for believing in Jesus. Also, John violates the maxim of manner in his attempt to keep his identity obscure from the Jews by speaking non-literally.

It is observed that Jesus' non-observance of the maxim of manner in His conversation with Nicodemus (John 3: 3; 5-8) in which His non-literal speech act obscures what He means; and also His lack of brevity (John 3: 10-21) significantly result in communication difficulty. Probably, this is the reason which does not facilitate any more conversation between the interlocutors on the issue.

The concurrent violation of the maxims of quantity and relevance is also observed. The two maxims are not adhered to, by the interlocutors on three instances which amount to 2.08%. There are three instances of the violation of the maxims of quantity, relevance and manner by John and Jesus. In each case, the violation makes it very difficult for the hearer(s) to understand the speakers. The hearer(s) are bewildered. This is significant for linguistic communication as it is observed that the violation of these maxims hardly facilitate linguistic communication among the interlocutors. A deliberate non-adherence to the maxim of quantity, relevance and manner hinders the addressee from recognizing and understanding the speaker's illocutionary act.

The one hundred percent and ninety-six point five percent adherence to the maxims of quality and relevance respectively are significant as they indicate the level of cooperation that exists between the interlocutors. The interlocutors have the desire to communicate, they do so and their turn-takings are closely connected, thus, indicating the genuineness of the intention of the interlocutors to communicate. The maxim of quantity and the maxim of manner are adhered to 79.9% and 79.2% respectively. These levels of compliance portray that the interlocutors consciously engage in conversation for the purposes of communication.

Notwithstanding, the violation of the maxim of quantity is 20.1%; that of the maxim of manner is 20.8% and that of the maxim of relevance is 3.5%. These non-observances of the maxims of quantity and manner move the conversation forward

resulting in more turn takings. However, they do not facilitate easy linguistic communication in conversation as it ought to be.

### **3. Findings**

The speech act of every interlocutor in the data is examined using the maxims of the Cooperative Principle. The interlocutors adhere to the maxims of quality, quantity, relevance and manner in their conversations at 100%, 79.9%, 96.5% and 79.2% respectively, though there are instances of violations. The high percentage of adherence to each of the maxims facilitates cordial linguistic interactions and is an impetus to the cooperative behaviour observed among the interlocutors.

But the violation of the maxims of quantity, relevance and manner by the interlocutors affords them to express their attitude both to the speaker and the topic or issue at hand. Also, it leads the hearer to presume that the speaker is hostile, difficult to understand, not cooperative and non-chalant. The hearer is then forced to withdraw from further linguistic interaction with the speaker. The resultant ripples of such withdrawal are better imagined. Communication has not only broken down, human relation and interaction are fraught with misunderstandings, suspicions, confrontations and strife.

### **4. Conclusion**

The violation of the maxims of manner, relevance and quantity in linguistic communication adversely obscures the illocutionary act of the speaker and can offend the hearer. Linguistic communication is much enhanced when a speaker avoids concurrent violation of the maxims.

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**Appendix:** *A Table Showing the Distribution of the Maxims of the Cooperative Principles in Selected Communication in the Book of Saint John of the Holy Bible*

| <i>S/N</i> | <i>Reference</i> | <i>Speaker</i>          | <i>Quality</i> | <i>Quantity</i> | <i>Relevance</i> | <i>Manner</i> |
|------------|------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|
| 24         | John 3:3         | Jesus                   | ✓              | X7              | X2               | X7            |
| 25         | John 3:3         | Nicodemus               | ✓              | ✓               | ✓                | ✓             |
| 26         | John 3:5-8       | Jesus                   | ✓              | ✓               | ✓                | X8            |
| 27         | John 3:9         | Nicodemus               | ✓              | ✓               | ✓                | ✓             |
| 28         | John 3:10-11     | Jesus                   | ✓              | X8              | ✓                | X9            |
| 29         | John 3:26        | John's disciples        | ✓              | ✓               | ✓                | ✓             |
| 30         | John 3:27-36     | John                    | ✓              | X9              | ✓                | X10           |
| 31         | John 5:6         |                         | ✓              | ✓               | ✓                | ✓             |
| 32         | John 5:7         | The Impotent Man        | ✓              | X10             | ✓                | ✓             |
| 33         | John 5:8         | Jesus                   | ✓              | ✓               | ✓                | ✓             |
| 34         | John 5:10        | The Jews                | ✓              | ✓               | ✓                | ✓             |
| 35         | John 5:11        | The Impotent Man        | ✓              | ✓               | ✓                | ✓             |
| 36         | John 5:12        | The Jews                | ✓              | ✓               | ✓                | ✓             |
| 37         | John 7:3-4       | Jesus brothers          | ✓              | X11             | ✓                | X11           |
| 38         | John 7:6-8       | Jesus                   | ✓              | X12             | ✓                | X12           |
| 39         | John 7:15        | The Jews                |                | ✓               | ✓                | ✓             |
| 40         | John 7:16-19     | Jesus                   | ✓              | X13             | ✓                | X13           |
| 41         | John 7:20        | Jews (The people)       | ✓              | X14             | ✓                | X14           |
| 42         | John 7:21-24     | Jesus                   | ✓              | X15             | ✓                | X15           |
| 43         | John 7:45        | Chief Priests/Pharisees | ✓              | ✓               | ✓                | ✓             |
| 44         | John 7:46        | The Officers            | ✓              | ✓               | ✓                | ✓             |
| 45         | John 7:47-49     | The Pharisees           | ✓              | X16             | ✓                | X16           |
| 46         | John 7:50-51     | Nicodemus               | ✓              | ✓               | ✓                | ✓             |



## **22. The Use of Shared Knowledge and Symbols in Jukun Proverbs**

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It is a fact that proverbs used on their own without reference to a particular context are next to nothing, as they can hardly communicate any useful idea. It is in the realization of this that we examine two aspects that are basic for the use and interpretation of any given proverb. The areas isolated for discussion are the shared knowledge which gives, especially the addressee of a given proverb the necessary clue towards the interpretation and understanding of proverbs as well as the use of symbols in proverbs and what they stand for in the society. In order to situate the discussion, instances have been drawn from Jukun society where natural phenomena, animals as well as historical antecedents all play significant roles in the use and interpretation of proverbs. Data for the study were generated through the researcher's knowledge of the language as a native speaker. The theoretical framework for the work is based on the pragmatic theories of Bach and Harnish's (1984) Mutual Contextual Beliefs (MCBs).

### **1. Introduction**

As posited by Fasiku (2006), it is difficult to have a universally acceptable definition of proverbs. Several attempts have been made by scholars to define the concept. Obeliecvich (1994) for instance defines proverbs as "traditional popular saying which offer wisdom and advice in brief and pithy manner". He categorised proverbs primarily as belonging to the oral genre and are often witty and artful, with the use of poetic and rhetorical devices such as metaphor, rhythm, alliteration, assonance etc. He further observed that proverbs have aura of timelessness, immutable truth about static human nature; sometimes archaic in their vocabulary or construction. In spite of his opinion that the universally acceptable definition of proverbs is difficult, Fasiku still observed that proverbs which are a reflection of the total world view of a people, evolved with the growth and development of the society. According to him, "proverbs serve as a linguistic confirmation of the totality of a people's world view and the epistemic cognition of this world view.... He concluded that people's peculiar experiences determine the nature of proverbs".

On his own part, Sotunde (2009) described proverbs as distinct linguistic heritage which reflect the spiritual and social life of the people. He further identified social interaction between people, folkloric experiences of the community and "animism and animatism" as sources of proverbs and through these, people sought and found a meaning for their existence.

From the above submissions, it could be argued that proverbs are not only a symbol of identify, values and belief, but also instrument of instruction, education and discovery. A popular Yoruba proverb according to Rumide (2013) says "*Owe lesin oro, oro lesin owe*,

*boro ba sonu, owe la finwa*” (proverbs are the compass with which the complex path of linguistic interaction is navigated).

Proverbs are vital aspect of the people’s communicative activities in the society because they could be employed to perform some illocutionary acts of: advising, cautioning, rewarding, punishing, insulting, etc. (Maiyanga 1998). They therefore have pragmatic implications just like words. It is based on this that Fergusson (1984:4) defines proverb as ‘succinct and memorable statement that contains advice, warning or prediction or analytical observation’. Ogbalu (1965), Shopen (1979) and Onyemelukwu (2004) all share the same view and also go ahead to state that proverbs serve the following functions in the society: teaching, reprimanding, and commanding undesirable act or behaviour among others. Our purpose in this write up is to examine the symbols employed in the use of proverbs as well as the condition which makes their interpretation possible, which is the knowledge shared by both the user and the listener.

## **2. Jukun: The people, language and culture**

The term ‘Jukun’ by which the Jukun people of Nigeria are generally known, is derived from the Jukun compound word for ‘men’ or ‘apa-jukun’. The Jukun people live in areas along the upper Benue River and are commonly believed to be descendants of the people of Kororofa, one of the most powerful Sudanic kingdoms during the late European Middle Ages. The people comprise a congeries of many groups, each organized on a different basis, although polygamous extended families seem to be the dominant unit (Encyclopedia Britannica).

Within the middle belt area of Nigeria where the Jukun ethnic group is predominant, there are four major dialects of the language. While the Wapan dialect is found in Wukari local government area, Kpazo dialect is spoken in Donga and Takum Local Government areas and Kona is spoken in Jalingo Local Government area all in Taraba state. The Wanu dialect is found in Abinse in Benue state. At the present time, the Jukun people are not a corporate body under one administration. The main body (wapan) is under the king of Wukari, the Aku Uka. According to Meek (1933), the absence of the tribal cohesion is due to the disintegration of the tribe which follows the Fulani conquests at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

According to Shimizu (1980), the language belongs to the Nigritic or Niger Congo family of African languages, which are spoken widely from Senegal to Kenya. Languages such as Yoruba and Swahili belong to the same family. The word ‘Jukun’ also refers to the language spoken by the people.

## **3. Proverbs as Discourse**

Human beings in the society daily engage in one form of discourse or the other by means of interactional talk or conversation. Such interaction is only possible through language as a means of communication. The act of talking to one another in the society through the means of language is known as ‘discourse’, (Osisanwo 2008:5). In course of such interaction especially given the importance the African society attaches to Orature, proverbs are usually employed to enrich the speakers’ speeches.

Several ideas can be presented through proverbs. Based on this, the proverb could be used to advice, reprimand, and curse or even praise an individual. Onyemelukwu (2004:3) Comments that proverbs are form of discourse in the society, thus:

... a popular expression which succinctly conveys truth and wisdom with a view to teach, praise, commend, advise, correct, indict, warn, rebuke or castigate a person, denounce, reprimand or condemn an undesirable act or behaviour or a vice.

Based on the above definitions of proverbs, it is observable that they can be expressed in many semantic fields. As rightly observed by Maiyanga (1998: 10), they can be about government, law, death, agriculture, oppression or the burden of power-“uneasy lies the head that wears the crown”.

There are many instances where proverbs have served as the most suitable form of communication in situations and relationships of potential or latent conflict. In the Jukun society, there are instances where disputes involving married couples are resolved through the use of appropriate proverbs. For instance, Yamusa (1983: 51) cites a case involving a man whose wife packed her belongings to her father’s house, and when the matter was brought to the palace, the leader’s comment was thus:

A woman does not marry her father. For this reason, his wife must not set the first example. Even her stay in her father’s house cannot prevent misunderstanding. If one observes the teeth and the tongue he needs to think twice. This is what we cannot avoid totally. She needs to be a little more patient. Misunderstanding is a visitor. It comes and goes.

According to Finnegan (1970), proverbs gain their significance from the situations in which they are used. This follows therefore that in the event that some proverbs appear to have contradictory senses that could simply be because there are many possible situations and angles from which one can look at a problem.

Proverbs are used in lawsuits and arguments to minimize friction. In our homes, they serve as commentary on life as a reminder that the wisdom of our ancestors may still be useful to us today. That is why in most African societies, proverbs are usually employed in serious discussions.

As a source of discourse, proverbial sayings tend to manifest even in the chants of the followers and attendants to the masquerades in Jukun land which are deployed as instruments of self-pride, harassments and intimidation of rival groups, women, children or witches and wizards. Butari (2010) cites the chants of Ihabi followers, in form of poem:

You, the grave of witches and wizards...  
You, the strangulator of the leopard to death...  
You, the dangerous wasp...

‘You’ above refers to the ihabi masquerade and its attendant prowess in the society.

Death in every society usually provokes the human thoughts and anger which are hardly controlled. In some instances, such emotions are expressed in form of proverbs. For instance, Meek (1931) in Butari (2006) cites the following as a form of lamentation over the death of the Jukun king which is adorned with various proverbial sayings:

Our lord (achindo), wither are you going?  
Return, oh return, in whose hands have  
You left us? Our corn, our beans  
Our ground-nuts...going off thus and leaving us  
Destitute of rain and corn?

The Jukun have a rich inventory of stories that describe events in a world where the main characters are animals such as the rabbits, turtles, lions, elephants that talk to one another and act anthropomorphic dramas. With these stories, it is possible to convey a great deal about human experience and cultural values so that it would be possible for stories to be told about real life people in the community. A notable example is the proverb:

1) ***karibo danra kyen san ba miu*** (the turtle says, a trip is better while the dew is still on)

as a piece of advice to start a venture as early as possible. Usually, in the narration of the tale, the folk narrator expresses in the tale the cardinal point or the philosophy of the tale. The summary and conclusive proverbial statement in the folktale narrative further helps to bring into focus the wondering minds of the children and adult members of the audience who have long been carried away into the world of fantasy in some cases during the main narrative phase of the folktale.

From the genre of Jukun exclamatory remarks ‘agbo!’ comes a series of proverbial sayings. The effective and appropriate usage of the exclamatory remarks is almost an exclusive right of the elders. The exclamation generally attempts to put a stop to an action which is improper and unethical within the cultural context, e.g.:

2) ***Agbo! Kuna ngha nghana*** (Agbo! the fowl has grown teeth)

3) ***Agbo! Bee ka wo kuna ka zanzeri*** (Agbo! the dog will bark while the fowl will answer)

While number 2 is the expression of a strange and abominable act which is indicated by the use of two impossible things: the fowl and the teeth, number 3 is an expression usually uttered as a threat.

#### 4. Proverbs and Shared Knowledge

Several scholars have commented on the term ‘shared knowledge’. Sacks (1967) specify how the speaker’s implicit use of these expectancies generates conversation exchanges. Among the most important of these are the social categories or social reactions implied by speech content. Hudson (1983:77) identifies three kinds of knowledge:

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- (i) Cultural knowledge which is learned from other people which we create because we see that other people around us make use of them in their thinking).
  - (ii) Shared non-cultural knowledge: which is shared by people within the same community or the world over, but is not learned from each other (this is built without reference to other people as a convenient way of interpreting our experience).
  - (iii) Non-shared non-cultural knowledge which is unique to the individual.

For the understanding of a Jukun proverb, the speaker and the listener need background knowledge. Writing in support of this, Bach and Harnish (1979) propose an intention and inference approach to speech act. They argue that illocutionary acts (in our case, proverbs) are performed (uttered) with the intention that the hearer identified the act being performed. They therefore affirm that linguistic communication is basically an inferential process. They propose that in general, the inference made by the hearer and inference he takes himself to be intended to make is based not just on what the speaker says but also on mutual contextual beliefs (McBs) that is, salient information from the context known to both speaker and hearer.

For our study, the cultural knowledge as well as the non-shared non-cultural knowledge are relevant. This is because whereas the cultural knowledge helps an individual to know about the proverbs generally, he or she still needs the non-shared non-cultural knowledge to know which proverb suits a particular context and why such proverb is appropriate for that particular situation.

As rightly opined by Lamidi in Babatunde and Adeyanju (2002:258), people who have lived together for some times are bound to participate in activities, discuss issues, share ideas and confide in one another. He further states that:

All the interactions and products of relationships and confidence build up to the knowledge shared by people at a particular time. Such shared knowledge could be personal, that is involving individuals, or communal involving the community. It can also be social, cultural, or traditional or all of these put together. The major ingredient is that more than one person is involved in the knowledge of some particular information or cultural values.

As a vital tool for communicating certain ideals in the society, proverbs depend largely on context as background knowledge. According to Malinowsky (1946) in Butari (2010), context can be seen as the immediate concrete circumstances about what was going on while the words are said. This also includes the physical environment of the speech event, the participants involved in the discourse as well as the cultural norms. Nuan (1993) has identified two types of contexts which could exist in any conversation: the linguistic (the language that accompanies the piece of discourse under analysis) and non-linguistic (the communicative event that took place at the particular time) be it a joke, story, quarrel or proverb as the case may be. Context also takes in to account certain things such as: the topic, setting, physical situation, the participants in a conversation, their relationship,



background knowledge as well as the assumptions underlying the communicative event. For instance, in using the proverb:

4) *Angwu hi bye dihi mba* (a young partridge follows the crafty steps of the mother)

a careful and conscious user needs to note both the linguistic and non-linguistic contexts in order to make the proverb relevant within the context in which it is employed. To this, at the linguistic level, both the speaker and the listener need to understand here the possible personification of the linguistic items ‘angwu’ (the young partridge) and ‘dihi’ (the mother partridge) at the non-linguistic level, the physical environment in which the saying is been employed determines both the use and its interpretation. For instance, if it is an elder person that has uttered this proverb to a younger person who has done something good, the saying could mean a commendation and praise of both the perpetuator of the act and his parents in which case, the proverb is employed positively. Conversely, if the younger person in question has done something wrong, the uttering of the same proverb could mean an insult in which case, it is employed in a negative manner. The instance above demonstrates that in order to appreciate the operation of the proverb in any communicative process, such proverb needs to be investigated in terms of its use in a specific context which is premeditated upon shared knowledge of the participants.

As a linguistic phenomenon, the interpretation of a proverb depends largely on ‘background knowledge’ of both the speaker and the listener. According to Numan (1993:3) background knowledge as a sociolinguistic item means ‘the theory of the world which the speaker or listener makes use of in interpreting a piece of spoken or written language’. For instance, to effectively interpret the proverb:

5) *Gbawe a jimjim she kuru mba* (the slippery road does not respect even the king)

background knowledge is necessary. This is because in one instance if an elderly person uttered this saying to another elderly friend who had earlier on complained of hunger, ‘hunger’ forms what Bach and Harnish (1999) referred to as Mutual Contextual Beliefs (MCBs). In another situation, the same words ‘slippery road’ spoken by the same people could mean either ‘death or sleep’ if the complaint of the friend was on any of these natural phenomena. This is because in the society, hunger, death or sleep are all necessities that affect everybody including the king whose position in the society is regarded as the highest. Based on this, it is only through background knowledge that one can interpret this type of proverb.

The way in which the proverb user has to be understood is governed by certain shared knowledge between the addresser and the listener within the context of its usage. Supporting this view, Sietel (1972), Parker (1974) and Grobler (1994) all state that proverbs can be viewed as strategies for the correct handling of situations. Strategy in this instance denotes the addresser’s motive for using the proverb. The strategy may for instance be described as ‘persuasive’ when the speaker’s aim is to convince the listener to accept his point of view thereby creating understanding between them. Proverbs can also

be used to correlate ideas between people in the social situation. One can for instance, correlate the terms of the proverb with himself (first person correlation), or with the listener (second person correlation), or with a person who is not a listener (third person correlation). Each of these may render a different understanding of the same proverb.

For instance, two persons are discussing the bad behaviour of another person's children. One of them eventually sums up the conversation by pointing out that the children in fact only take after the parents. He thus says:

- 6) *Nwun kwii nyani ba ngomkyuru mba* (the tadpole must possess a rough skin) [like father like son] or:
- 7) *Gbagaboro da nyani nuu yura mba* (the forest climber cannot expand beyond the edge of the forest)

The given circumstance here represents the normal use of the proverbs that is, in connection with a third person correlation. The same proverbs can however be used with regard to the following: a person is reprimanded because of something he has said or done. He defends himself by arguing that he acted after the example of a superior. The same proverb is used here by the speaker in connection with himself i.e. in the first person correlation, to justify his action. A third possibility is this: in a conversation between two people, the former expresses his displeasure regarding the latter's conduct which he ascribes to the latter's parents who he assumes had set for him. In this instance, the proverbs refer to the second person i.e. it is used in the second person correlation.

With reference to the above situation, the different correlations and the correspondence meanings emanating from them may be stated as follows:

First person: justification of own action.

Second person: direct negative criticism amounting to insult.

Third person: negative comment.

One of the things people share when they live together are familiarity with the general terrain, which could be familiarity with certain places that will give rise to proverbial expressions. For instance, in some parts of Jukun land, certain proverbs are expressed through the behaviour of natural phenomenon like the stream in the following proverb:

- 8) *Au Afan, Manwum mari sun nyina ba riya, uya bu gbawe* (You Afan, if Manwum is going with its load, better give way)

This proverb centres on the nature of two popular streams: Afan (one that flows slowly) and Manwum (one that flows very fast). The background knowledge needed here is that while Afan flows slowly without uprooting trees, Manwum has been known for colossal destructions over the years. Based on this, although both streams are situated between the village and the farms, parents usually will warn their children against playing in Manwum

but not Afan. It is based on this knowledge that in any conflict situation involving two people of unequal strength, the party that is weaker is cautioned against going into a fight which it is obvious he will lose. Over the years therefore, while Manwum has come to be associated with strength, Afan is associated with weakness.

The illocutionary act of a proverb sometimes depends on the shared knowledge of both the user and the addressee. For instance:

9) *Vosa, voji* (The hand that works is the hand that eats)

If for instance, a father utters this proverb to his hard working son while rewarding him (for this is a common practice in the Jukun society); the saying is to serve as encouragement to the son to keep up with the good work. If on the other hand, while presenting the reward to the same son the father rather utters the saying to another son who is known to be lazy, it is reprimanding to the lazy son. This proverb therefore serves as both punishment and reward depending on the background knowledge of the users.

In the same vein, certain proverbs could serve the dual roles of advice and didacticism based on the context and the shared knowledge of the participants in a discussion. For instance:

10) *Denkan ri gun ka pere a sen dara mba.* (The okra can never be taller than the farmer).

11) *Suun ri gunka keba shina mba.* (The ears can never be longer than the head)

If any of these proverbs is uttered by someone to his friend against challenging an elder with the aim of dissuading him from the act, he is advising him. Conversely, if the friend turned down the advice and came out regretting that he turned down his friend's advice against challenging an older person who is stronger than him, the utterance is for him to learn a lesson next time.

Another feature of shared knowledge in proverbial sayings is that they could be employed to initiate a verbal war by indirectly referring an opponent without mentioning him or her by name. Although the reference to butts could be indirect, the user gives enough cues such that the opponent picks up the message. For instance:

12) *Dagbuun ji kosai yi be bi sika mba* (The baboon only eats bean cake but does not know the cost of beans)

Here, someone's carelessness is condemned without mentioning him by name. Rather, he is represented by the animal 'baboon'. Although the addressee is not named, the reference is actually to one who behaves in a careless manner like him. He is therefore being scolded for displaying such attitude. Although the user of the proverb does not mention name, the target is expected to feel bad because by this token, he has been compared to the animal 'baboon' which has come to be associated with carelessness.

### 5. Symbolism in Jukun proverbs

As rightly stated by Lamidi in Babatunde and Adeyanju (2002: 262) of the Yoruba invective poetry, symbols play significant parts in Jukun proverbs. The creative use of the appropriate symbols in the Jukun proverbs conjures up pictures that are dexterously linked with situations. Different symbols can be used but they must also have prior interpretations in the society before they can be effective.

In the Jukun society, animals, trees and other natural phenomena symbolized so many things, while others are negatively portrayed, some have positive implications. While some of these images are derived from the behaviour of such things, others are derived from myths and tradition of the people. In the Jukun society, the mentioning of the animals *fyi* 'leopard' and the *mure* 'cat' at the same time conjures the image of strength/courage on one hand and fear on the other hand. The two extremes are expressed in the proverb:

13) *Fyi ma Mure* (The leopard has given birth to the cat)

This is an expression of disappointment especially by a father to a son who does not take after the father's exemplary life of courage and strength. While the leopard symbolizes the father who sees himself as brave and strong, the cat which symbolizes the son gives a disappointing image of fear and laziness. By juxtaposing the two animals, their different qualities are brought to the fore.

The mentioning of the white antelope conjures the picture of someone who is responsible for his own misfortune by inflicting self-injury on itself either as a result of overzealousness or foolishness. This act is expressed in the following proverb:

14) *Namtaa kyi jinto gban diriba* (The white antelope provides its skin which is used to make the hunter's bow)

The skin of the white antelope is believed to be a more suitable source used to fashion the bow which the hunter uses to hunt gems. Based on this, apart from hunting the white antelope for meat as the primary reason, its skin was also used as a weapon. Since the animal serves two purposes, first and foremost as meat and secondly as weapon, the hunter becomes more interesting and desperate to tract it down, a situation which makes the animal a prime target. Unfortunately for the animal, it is its skin that the hunter uses to hunt it. The animal therefore inflicts injury on itself.

Any warring situation is usually expressed through the juxtaposition of the leopard and the dog. The common proverb that is used for such occasion is:

15) *Mn ge kyira ta ya Bee ba Fyi ku bira anzun* (I was feeding the leopard and the dog at the same time)

It is commonly believed that the meeting of the two animals usually sparks off a fierce conflict. To bring them together therefore means to steer up a serious war. The source of this saying is in one of the popular stories in the society which has it that the two used to

be together until the quest for supremacy ensued between them which forced the dog to abandon the forest to live among human beings. Based on this, if the leopard who regards itself as being in-charge of the forest sees the dog in the forest, it usually will fight tooth and nails to protect its territory.

The elephant symbolizes the peak of anything with regard to its size. To this, in order to express the size of anything, the animal is employed as its superlative form. It is therefore common to equate it with contentment. For instance:

- 16) *Pere a zun nwunyin ka mu mba, bina ka mu ku ni funa?* (If after eaten an elephant one is not satisfied is it a goat that will satisfy him?)

The proverb as used above is an indictment on someone who is greedy. Any situation where one appears not to be contented with what he has, this proverb is usually employed as either an advice or indictment. By this token, greed and lack of contentment are strongly condemned in the society. The same message can be conveyed in the following where the images of the rain and the dew are used:

- 17) *su tau u kye mba afunu wa pu miu wakye?* (If after been beaten by the rain you are not clean, is it the dew that will make you clean?)

Apart from animals, there are other things employed as symbols in Jukun proverbs. For instance, 'the hat' symbolizes affluence which is not a basic necessity as depicted in the following:

- 18) *Nwun shii ri be kata mba* (The orphan does not need the hat)

In this instance, one who is from a poor background is admonished to 'cut his coat according to his size' by restricting himself to the basic things that are necessary for him in life. This saying is borne out of the fact that in real sense, while one can decide not to use the cap, one cannot afford to go naked with a cap on his head as this will not only be strange and misplacement of priority but also an act of foolishness. The saying is a direct condemnation of affluence and extravagant living especially by one with a poor financial background. The foolishness in living such life style is that one's progress in life is been mortgaged or offered on the altar of the pleasures of the moment.

Like any other linguistic group, water in the Jukun society symbolises life. It is based on this that one who denies another person water is described as a wicked person. As a result, no matter the circumstance one finds oneself, one needs water. For instance, even as traumatic as the death of a love one is:

- 19) *Beri ke kyii wa zape* (While mourning the dead, you still need to drink water)

Water in this instance symbolizes food which is a necessity of life. No matter the kind of work one is engaged in, he cannot be too busy to forget to eat. Similarly, no matter how



sad one could be even when he has lost a dear one, such situation will never prevent him from eating because he needs food to sustain himself even within the period of mourning. So in a way, the proverb is simply stating the obvious that while you mourn, you eat or still need to attend to the necessities of life.

In Jukun society, there are different types of masquerades. However, all of them are believed to possess some spiritual powers. It is based on this that they are seen as been capable of causing either fortune or misfortune to one depending on one's relationship with them. The masquerades are also believed to have the power to take people's lives if they indulge in certain vices. They don't spare even their masters any time their masters go wrong. It is based on this that such masters are expected to be people that live above board because after all:

20) *Busum ri kapyen na pere a sen tana* (The masquerade must first greet the master)

The masquerades therefore serve as the symbol of justice and regulator of people's actions, especially if such acts run contrary to the acceptable norms in the society. This is the same situation with 'the law as an ass'; that spares no one, even the judge. This situation further gives rise to the caution:

21) *Busum ri pan a pere a sunsoana* (The masquerade attacks only the messenger)

This is an admonition for people to resist been used by others to perpetuate evil acts. As a judge, the masquerade attacks only the messenger that is used and not the person behind the action. Since the person behind such evil act is not directly seen committing the act, the masquerade therefore attacks only the person directly responsible since there is no any evidence that links him to the evil act, the same situation in any law suit.

The words 'sunka' and 'puri' stand for Hausa and Fulani respectively in Jukun language. They have come to symbolize 'two sides of the same coin'. The proverb is rendered as follows:

22) *She Puri ka Sunka* (to avoid the Fulani but claim to be a friend to the Hausa)

Since both of them practise the same religion, there is no way one can claim to embrace one and keep the other at bay since they meet at the worship centre often. This image will be better appreciated by looking briefly at the historical antecedent. The Jukun people who were said to coexist with the Hausa people as brothers felt betrayed by them because they were believed to have paved the way for Othman Danfodio's jihad in the land. Based on this, the Hausa people who were hitherto seen as brothers became known as betrayals that collaborated with the Fulani to wage the jihad against them. After that episode, a cold war is said to have evolved between the Jukun and Hausa who have come to be regarded as people who are not trustworthy. Whatever the image the Fulani conjure in the mind of the Jukun, it is by the same token that the Hausa is viewed.

The nose and eyes as parts of the human body are symbols which feature prominently in some proverbs in Jukun. For instance:

23) *Ba a san nwin a ba a sa izoo* (What affects the nose equally affects the eyes)

This expression emphasizes the importance of unity, oneness and brotherliness in the society. Here, people are urged to live in unison because an individual's strength is derived from his membership of the society. He can therefore not afford to operate alone in the society. Based on this, if someone is in need or finds himself in a difficult situation, everyone should either come to his aid or rally round him; after all, what goes around comes around. Today is someone's turn, yours could come tomorrow, thereby underscoring the need for 'all hands to be on deck'.

The symbol of 'yakara' a head pad is also relevant in some proverbs of the Jukun people. The item is used to cushion the effect of the pain usually caused by heavy load on the head. In using it in one of the proverbs, the user employs it to condemn another person for shifting the blame of his failure or inability to with stand a difficult situation on someone else.

24) *Soana ma ndo u ra, u te jira senya yakara mba* (If the load is too heavy for you, don't blame the head pad)

It is a common sight to see people coming from the farm to constantly shift their loads from one part of the head to the other while claiming that the head pad is not situated on the head correctly. This usually occurs after taken off from the farm especially when the person is tired. It is with this realization that one is expected to take blame for one's wrong doings and not to point accusing fingers at another person.

The image of bush track is also used in some proverbs to discourage people from depending on others.

25) *Im wa shun umi nyin bi perezun mba, uka afa bu* (If you don't want to see someone's feces, you must create your own bush track)

The easy way for one to avoid the dew while going to the bush to defecate in the morning is to follow a track already created by someone. However, it has its negative effect as one is likely to encounter the feces of the original person who created the track. To avoid such gory sight, one has to take the initiative and the pain of creating his own track. In the same vein, for one to be successful and be comfortable in life, one is hereby admonished to take his own initiative. By so doing, one's success cannot be attributed to the help and assistance of another person, a situation which could turn out to be embarrassing to one in future.

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**6. Conclusion**

In this work, attempt was made to examine the discourse nature of proverbs as a special genre through which people communicate in the society. It has been established that through symbols such as natural phenomena, body parts, animals as well as historical antecedents couple with the people's shared knowledge due to their coexistence in the society, proverbs could be used and interpreted effectively in order to achieve communicative goals of advising, cautioning, reprimanding or praising among others in which they are intended.

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## **23. Encyclopaedic and Mutual Knowledge as Pragmatic Determiners in Hausa Discourse**

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Encyclopaedic knowledge is the knowledge associated with a word which is not immediately relevant to linguistic structure, while mutual knowledge is where the speaker makes guesses about the knowledge his listeners have (Smith, 1982). This paper seeks to vindicate that these types of knowledge serve as pragmatic determiners in Hausa using series of conversational discourse. Encyclopaedic knowledge, on the other hand, plays a role in certain inference processes and is excluded from the description of lexical items. Mutual knowledge contends that shared information and experience are essential to effective communication and this is possible via pragmatic means where both speakers and listeners rely on context in constructing and interpreting meaning. This paper is a modest contribution to this end.

### **1. Introduction**

Discourse meaning has both pragmatic and semantic dimension. Pragmatically, a speech represents a complex action or an articulated proposal of a joint action to be realized with the participation of the addressee. Renkema (2010) believed that discourses refer to the world in which the discourse participants live as well as to a host of other “worlds” which can relate in a number of ways with the participants world. In the same vein, Hart (2010) believed that ‘discourse is a cooperative action between text producer and text consumer. In the more basic sense that any linguistic representation is formulated in such a way that the text consumer can sufficiently accurately represent the information that the text producer intends to communicate, whether or not that proposition is a true or accurate representation of reality. This lower level of cooperation in communication is the central principle in pragmatics and this paper shows that both encyclopaedic and mutual knowledge of the parties involved in communication is what bridge the communication gap between the text producers and text consumers. This is due to the fact that discourse is related to the world in which the interlocutors communicate. This paper has chiefly pragmatic concern. It is interested in understanding how language is used by people to act socially and to achieve their goals in a variety of social contexts.

It also seeks to elucidate the roles played by encyclopaedic and mutual knowledge in establishing common goal. We begin our discussion by clarifying the terminological and conceptual meanings associated with the various notions of encyclopaedic and mutual knowledge. The paper then turns its attention to the mutual knowledge paradox which addresses the knowledge required in processing meaning in everyday conversation. This is in line with the fact that listeners always actively participate in the construction of meaning



in particular by using inferences to fill out the text towards an interpretation of speaker meaning.

### **1.1 The Construct of Encyclopaedic Knowledge**

Keckes (2014:81) stated that “encyclopaedic knowledge is viewed as a structure system of knowledge organized as a network”. “Encyclopaedic meaning is the meaning of a word or lexeme that is related to everything known about the referent of that word or lexeme” (Huang, 2011:103). Encyclopaedic knowledge is a structured data base containing exhaustive information on many branches of knowledge. The selection of actual situational meaning is determined by contextual factors. The encyclopaedic view however claims that encyclopaedic knowledge is included in semantics and meaning is determined by context. According to this approach, there is no definable, pre-existing word meaning, because the meaning of a word in context is selected and shaped by encyclopaedic knowledge. Unlike the dictionary view of meaning, where there is separation of core meaning (semantics) from non-core actual meaning (pragmatics).

In the encyclopaedic view, “lexical items are point of access to encyclopaedic knowledge” (Langacker, 1987). Consequently, words are not containers that present neat, prepackaged bundles of information (Evans, 2010). Instead, they selectively provide access to particular parts of the huge networks of encyclopaedic knowledge. Therefore, encyclopaedic knowledge is considered a structured system of knowledge organized as a network. It includes cultural models and schemas that provide scenarios or actions plans for individuals of how to interpret the behaviour of others in one or another circumstance.

Huang (2011:103) believed that encyclopaedic semantics is a perspective on the study of meaning within cognitive semantics, which is characterized by a number of assumptions, as follows:

- a. It doesn't distinguish between semantics and pragmatics.
- b. Assumes that encyclopaedic knowledge represents a structured body of knowledge or information.
- c. Maintain that encyclopaedic meaning emerges in context of use.
- d. It regards lexical items as point of access to encyclopaedic knowledge.
- e. It holds that the encyclopaedic knowledge that a lexical item has access to is dynamic.

From the above assumptions, Langacker (1987) divides the types of knowledge that make up the encyclopaedic network into four types:

*Conventional:* Conventional knowledge associated with a particular word concerns the extent to which a particular facet of knowledge is shared within a linguistic community. For instance, conventional knowledge relating to the lexical concept ‘Banana’ might include the knowledge that some people in their culture have bananas with their lunch or that a banana can serve as a snack between meals.

*Generic:* Generic knowledge concerns the degree of generality (as opposed to specificity) associated with a particular word.

*Intrinsic:* intrinsic knowledge is that aspect of a word's meaning that makes no reference to entities external to the referent. Intrinsic knowledge relates to the internal properties of an entity that are not due to external influence. Shape is a good example of intrinsic knowledge relating to objects. For example, we know that bananas tend to have a characteristic curved shape.

*Characteristic:* Characteristic knowledge concerns aspects of the encyclopaedic information that are characteristic of or unique to the class of entities that the word designates.

Therefore, encyclopaedic knowledge is grounded in human interaction with others (social experience) and the world around us (physical experience). For example, Then there are quite a few things which we know about eating which however do not play any role in semantic interpretation. We know, for example, that one normally eats breakfast, lunch and dinner. We also know that we normally eat from a plate and normally use various instruments while eating (a knife, a fork or a spoon, for example). Furthermore, we also know what a usual breakfast consists of (often depending on culture or country, of course). But all this information belongs to what we call encyclopaedic knowledge.

## 1.2 The Construct of Mutual Knowledge

Mutual knowledge is the reflexivity of belief and intention (Green, 1996) where speaker and listener can interpret intentions through regressive judgment as to mutual knowledge. Mutual knowledge' as a technical notion was introduced by Lewis (1969) to account for how people coordinate with each other. It was also introduced, in turn, by Stalnaker (1978), based on Lewis's mutual knowledge, to account for the way in which information accumulates in conversation. In this view, people in conversation take certain propositions to be common ground, and when they make assertions, they add to this common ground. So, common ground is seen as a reflexive or self-referring notion.

## 2.1 Methodology and Theoretical Framework

In order to carry out this research certain important methods were used to collect the working data. The most important method used in this research is observation of conversation among Hausa native speakers. Therefore, the data derived from observation of deitic use of forms by competent speakers of Hausa and elicitation from these speakers. The method is also coupled with reading conversations in the social media, i.e. facebook by cyber friends who engage in posting comments.

Discourse Representation Theory, or DRT, is employed for this study and is one of a number of theories of dynamic semantics, which have come upon the scene in the course of the past twenty years. The central concern of these theories is to account for the context dependence of meaning. It is a ubiquitous feature of natural languages that utterances are interpretable only when the interpreter takes account of the contexts in which they are made - utterance meaning depends on context. Moreover, the interaction between context and

utterance is reciprocal. Each utterance contributes (via the interpretation which it is given) to the context in which it is made. It modifies the context into a new context, in which this contribution is reflected; and it is this new context which then informs the interpretation of whatever utterance comes next.

### 3. Data Analysis and Discussion

#### 3.1 Encyclopaedic Knowledge as Context

This knowledge is also known as common-sense, background, socio-cultural and real world knowledge. This is the type of knowledge which a speaker might calculate others would have before, or independently of, a particular conversation, by virtue of membership in a community (Saeed, 1997). This could be speakers of same native language, citizen of same state, fellow university students, co-workers etc. each group or community implies certain types of knowledge which might be shared with other members and which conversationalist must seek to calculate as they interact, e.g.:

- |       |                         |                       |
|-------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. A: | Yunwa nake ji.          | I am hungry           |
| B:    | Bari na ara maka N 500. | Let me lend you N 500 |

This conversation gain coherence from the knowledge that money can be exchanged for food, which is cultural knowledge not present in any dictionary entry for the words food or money. Therefore, fleshing out utterances via inference relies on this kind of background knowledge.

- |       |                       |                             |
|-------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2. A: | mu je mu sha askirim. | Let's go and take Ice cream |
| B:    | mura nake yi.         | I am suffering from catarrh |

Here, speaker A might reasonably infer that B's reply is a refusal; that B's reply implies No. importantly, both the implication and inference rely on cultural knowledge about Mura and Askirim. Also in:

- |       |                               |                                               |
|-------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 3. A: | ka zo gida gobe mu ci abinci. | Come to my house tomorrow so we eat together. |
| B:    | Gobe watan Ramadan zai kama.  | Tomorrow is first Ramadan                     |

In the above conversational fragment, we can find that the second utterance is irrelevant to the utterance of the first speaker and we can also assume that the maxim of relevance is deliberately violated. Then can we conclude that it is unreasonable for the hearer to tell the speaker that tomorrow is first Ramadan, when 'A' gives him the offer to come and dine. Therefore, if 'A' and 'B' are Muslims, then 'A' will probably infer that B's reply means No because of the common ground they share (encyclopaedic knowledge).

- |       |                      |                    |
|-------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 4. A: | Ali ya mutu jiya     | Ali died yesterday |
| B:    | Ba shi da lafiya ne? | Was he sick?       |

Superficially, the B's answer has nothing to do with the A's question. 'B' violates the maxim of relevance. Actually, we must assume that 'B' is adhering to the Cooperative Principle and means something more than the literal meaning. The additional meaning, is that of the encyclopaedic knowledge about '*mutuwa*' and '*lafiya*' because it's a well-known fact that death is aligned mostly with those that are sick. Once the analysis of intended meaning goes beyond the linguistic meaning of an utterance, a vast number of issues have to be considered. Pragmatic meaning is derived from this conversation produced in a specific context (encyclopaedic knowledge) which is shared by the speaker and the hearer, and depends on their recognition of the Cooperative Principle and its maxims. Now let us see another example.

5. A:     Ayabar nan babu zaqi       This banana is not sweet  
       B:     Ai koriya ce               It is greenish

It is part of our generic knowledge which is an element of encyclopaedic knowledge that yellow bananas taste better than green bananas. The color yellow is more characteristic of bananas than the color red which is a characteristic of tomatoes. Therefore, what the hearer inferred about *ayaba* (banana) in relation to *zaqi* (sweetness) is that the deixis referent '*nan*' ([this] which indicates place deixis and the presence of the objet 'banana') is a greenish banana, and from his generic knowledge of all such type of banana as being unripe and sourness.

### 3.2 Mutual Knowledge as Context

It is obvious that both speakers and hearers rely on context in constructing and interpreting the meaning of utterances. Here, the focus is in an area of meaning where there is very clear evidence of combination of different types of knowledge, hence, language use. A speaker choosing how to make reference to an entity must make estimations of what the hearers know.

Gibbs (1987:565) gives a tight definition on the notion, as follows;

Where S= Speaker, A= Addressee.  
 S and A mutually knows a proposition P, if and only if:  
 S knows that P  
 A knows that p  
 S knows that A knows that P  
 A knows that S knows that A know that P,  
 and so on, add infinitum.

For an example of a proposition that might be mutual knowledge in this sense, we can go back to our examples (2 and 5) above and extend them slightly below:

6. A:     Mu je mu sha askirim       Let's go and drink ice cream  
       B:     Mura nake yi             Iam having catarrh  
       C:     Ee fa, haka ne.          Oh! That is it.

- 
- |       |                      |                            |
|-------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 7. A: | Ayabar nan babu zaqi | This banana is not sweet   |
| B:    | Ai koriya ce         | It is greenish             |
| A:    | Shi ya sa mana       | That is exactly the reason |

In example (6), we can take the mutually known proposition P to be *mura* catarrh usually prohibit taking *askirim* (ice cream) (because it is cold). So B knows this, and relies for his implication on A knowing it. Since A seems to understand the refusal correctly, then A did know P, and also knows that for B to imply it, A must have known it, and so on. Also, in (7) the mutually known proposition is *koriya* greenish (referring to banana) which is unripe and sour. In this also, B knows this, and relies for his implication on A knowing it. Since A seems to realize 'B's utterance correctly, then A did know P, and also knows that for B to imply it, A must have known it, continuously.

- |       |                 |                       |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 8. A: | Kin ci abincin? | Did you eat the food? |
| B:    | ai shinkafa ce  | It is rice            |
| A:    | oh, haka ne.    | ah, that is it.       |

In this there exists mutual knowledge of the proposition *shinkafa* rice as it relates to 'B'. So 'B' knows that he dislikes eating rice, and relies for his implication on A knowing it. Since A seems to understand the abhorrence to rice correctly, then A did know P, and also knows that for B to imply it, A must have known it.

- |       |                           |                            |
|-------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 9. A: | Shayi nake son na sha     | I want to drink tea        |
| B:    | Bari na xebo kalezir      | Let me bring some kerosene |
| A:    | Ai ina da rushon lantarki | I have an electric stove   |
| B:    | Ai an xauke wuta          | the light went off         |

The other main basis for mutual knowledge is joint experience. The joint experience may be perceptual. When A and B look knows a particular proposition, they can take their joint experience as a basis for certain mutual beliefs – that kerosene is used in cooking and preparing tea. The joint experience may be A's response to B's answer that they mutually establish that B has understood A, and 'A' understood 'B' for offering electric stove. Continuously, B's response to electric stove that 'the light went off, indicates that he understood A's offer correctly and inform him accordingly that the light went off. So, common ground that is based on joint perceptual or linguistic experiences between two people is called their 'personal common ground'.

#### 4.1 Conclusion

From the foregoing, it is established that apart from physical, social and linguistic contexts that play a great role in utterance interpretation, there exist encyclopaedic and mutual knowledge that serves as contexts in utterance production and interpretation. A discourse and its context are in close relationship: the discourse elaborates its context and the context helps interpret the meaning of utterances in the discourse. The knowledge of context is a



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premise of the analysis of a discourse. When we study and analyze a discourse, we should bear in mind that no context, no discourse and we should not neglect the related context of a discourse.

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## **24. A Pragmatic Analysis of some Selected Political Billboards Advertisement in Nasarawa Metropolis**

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The purpose of the paper to undertake a pragmatics analysis of some selected political billboards advertisement in Nasarawa metropolis. The paper discusses the concept of billboards advertisement as the use of signs along roadways to advertise a wide range of products, services, and causes. In general, the signs used in these roadside advertising campaigns must be over a certain size in order to be truly referred to as a billboard. Some of these political billboards were selected from the field as data. The researchers employed ‘Speech Act Theory’ to analyze the data collected. On the whole, the paper discovered that pragmatics analysis of language is nothing but an aspect of meaning which is derived not from the formal properties of words and construction, but from the way in which utterances are used and how they relate to the context in which they are uttered.

### **0. Introduction**

Studying pragmatic principles helps us to recognize how readers interpret the message. Thus, we need to differentiate between semantics, which is also a study of meaning and pragmatics. Peccei defines semantics generally as “the study of meaning that comes purely from linguistic knowledge”, and pragmatics as “the study that concentrates on those aspects of meaning that cannot be predicted by linguistic knowledge alone and takes into consideration knowledge about the physical and social world (1). According to Yule, “pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by speakers (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader)” (3).

The study of language advertising, from a linguistic point of view, has been attempted by several scholars (Leech (19), Geis (198), Vestergaard (98), Mencher (129), etc.). Indeed, the distinctive property of advertising language has been closely identified with the use of clauses, phrases, and words as minor sentences which constitute different kinds of grammar called disjunctive grammar. Again, semantics which is the study of meaning; and linguistic semantics is the study of how language organizes and expresses meaning. Pragmatics emerged as a reaction to the polemics from the inadequacies of semiotics, semantics, and sociolinguistics in handling meaning related philosophies (Thomas (14), Abraham (237) Levinson (98) Lyons (222) Adegbija (189). According to Morris (108), pragmatics deals with biotic aspects of semiosis, that is, with all the psychological, biological and sociological phenomena which occur in the functioning of signs. Thus, all the definitions of pragmatics point at context as the rallying point for meaningful interpretation of language in use Lawal (150). Therefore, the nature of human

language is completely different from all other communication systems such as animal and computer language. Human language is stimulus-free, creative, conventional, and arbitrary. We are able to use and understand new sentences, arrange smaller linguistic units in a given way in order to produce larger ones and most of all, match the arbitrary sounds and symbols to concrete objects in real life. Although we may not go into all these in the present study, as the study is restricted to pragmatic analysis of political billboards advertisement alone.

This means that, communication is an important feature of human life; and communication between individuals is done through the use of language. Language, as a phenomenon is a typical attribute of human beings. Thus, communication as a process is embedded in human culture, as the society changes, the transition of culture also changes. Human being live in a complex world and without communication, man's existence would be impossible (Schramm, 100, Pryse, 44).

### **1. Brief History of advertising**

In the beginnings of human existence, the first indications of advertising would have been word of mouth, progressing to another demonstration of advertising in the form of wall and rock paintings that have been found in many archaeological sites. In the ancient Egypt and Rome papyrus was used to make sale messages and wall posters. Later through centuries, people would frequently use symbols to advertise various trades and often they relied on oral performance to advertise goods or services for sale ("History Advert, Wikipedia). The 15th century saw the invention of printing press by Johannes Gutenberg and this paved way for expansion of advertising in the newspapers that was to follow in the 17th and 18th centuries. At first, these advertisements were usually just short texts promoting a certain product, but towards the end of 19th century technological advances meant that illustrations and colours could be added ("History of advertising", mediaknowall.com)

Advertising as an institution emerged towards the end of 19th century. The newly established agencies responded to the increasingly crowded marketplace, where manufacturers were realising that promotion of their products was vital if they were to survive in the business. The advance of radio broadcasting and later television broadcasting meant that through this media manufacturers were able to reach vast numbers of potential consumers.

During both world wars, advertising appeared in the form of propaganda and the development of industry meant there appeared the desire to create need in the consumer to buy promoted goods. Such method of influencing consumers became especially popular after the Second World War when there appeared an abundance of new goods for which need had to be created ("History of advertising", mediaknowall.com). A change also became apparent in the transformation of approach to advertising. In the 1960's creativity was the leading motion, which allowed the production of unexpected messages that made advertisements more tempting to the consumers ("Advertising", Wikipedia). Towards the end of last century it was obvious that advertising would also become closely connected to the world of Internet. Consequently, in present day of the new millennium, advertising has established itself firmly in the world of marketing as well as in the world of our daily lives.

### **1.1 Billboards Advertisement**

Advertisement is the market instrument which advertisers use to influence the behavior of consumers at the point of purchase (Sandage, Fruburger and Rotzol, 8). As the communicating element, within the marketing mix, it aims to manipulate consumer opinion towards particular products or market, mass media, billboards, sky writing etc. it constitutes the medium through which advertising messages are passed on the target audience, while consumers' response to the messages are monitored the quality or volume of the advertising product Comanor, (24). Advertising research has its roots in the behavioural sciences consisting of Psychology, Sociology, and Social Psychology hence, its central theme is people, therefore, the underlying purpose of all advertising is increased awareness of the consumers about a product Diamond and Oppenheim, (102).

Billboards advertisement is the use of signs along roadways to advertise a wide range of products, services, and causes. In general, the signs used in these roadside advertising campaigns must be over a certain size in order to be truly referred to as a billboard. The sign must be large enough for a driver or passenger in a vehicle to be able to clearly read the lettering while navigating the vehicle along a road. The use of billboard advertising has been around for many centuries. Prior to the advent of motor vehicles, primitive examples of billboards were sometimes used to alert people travelling on foot, on horseback, or by carriage that an inn could be found around within a certain distance up the road. Along with naming the inn and providing an approximation of the distance to the establishment, the billboard would sometimes list some of the amenities such as clean beds, food, and the presence of facilities to house the carriage or stable the horse. This concept shall be extensively explored in order to give this research work a better one.

The advertisements can be classified into commercial and noncommercial on the basis of the object and purpose involved in advertising. In non-commercial advertisement, selling and buying are not involved, but certain ideas, morals or appeals are communicated to the common public from government agencies, various associations, societies or individuals. The purpose may be related to charity, political propaganda or different social welfare measures. Indeed this aspect of advertisement is the concerned of the present study. On the other hand, the commercial advertisements are sub-classified into commercial consumer advertisement and prestige advertisements. The commercial consumer advertisement involve consumer goods such as cosmetics, medicine etc. While the prestige advertisement includes services like banking, insurance, etc. The commercial consumer advertisements are the most prominent in term of both quantity and quality.

### **2. Pragmatics: Conceptualization**

Although, pragmatics is a relatively new branch of linguistics, research on it can be dated back to ancient Greece and Rome where the term 'pragmaticus' is found in late Latin and 'Pragmaticos' in Greek, both meaning of being practical. Modern use and current practice of pragmatics is credited to the influence of the American philosophical doctrine of pragmatism. The pragmatics interpretation of semiotics and verbal communication studies in Foundations of the theory of Signs by Charles Morris (1938), for instance helped neatly expound the differences of mainstream enterprises in semiotics and linguistics. For Morris,



pragmatics studies the relations of signs to interpreters, while semantics studies the relations of signs to the objects to which the signs are applicable; and syntactic studies the formal relations of signs to one another.

In another development, Pragmatics was said to have emerged as a reaction against the hitherto – purely formalist approach to language study, an approach which had deprived man of the most outstanding of his ability, the ability to negotiate a meaning to the world instead of extracting a meaning that was already there. The emergence of pragmatics has caused the replacement of the idea of ‘linguistics competence’ with ‘communication competence’. Linguists who have championed the cause of a context-dependent layer of linguistics study included Austin, Lyons, Searle, Leech, and Halliday.

A pragmatics analysis of language use in advertisement is an investigation of how language has functioned in communication between the advertiser and his audience. This has incorporated the field of linguistic, philosophy, communication theories. Leech has cited that English of advertisement has aroused though hardly engaged the interest of linguists. We understood the pragmatics analysis of language to be the investigation into that aspect of meaning which was derived not from the formal properties of words and construction, but from the way in which utterances were used and how they relate to the context in which they were uttered.

## **2.1 Statement of the Problem**

Pragmatics analysis of language use in advertisement is an investigation of how language has functioned in communication between the advertisers and their audience. This has incorporated the field of linguistic, philosophy, communication theories, psychology and marketing. Leech has cited that “English of advertising has aroused though hardly engaged the interest of linguists. We equally understood the pragmatics analysis of language to be the investigation into that aspect of meaning which was derived not from the formal properties of words and construction, but from the way in which utterances were used and how they related to the context in which they were used.

Thus, advertisement is a medium of communication and expression and it effectively accomplishes the set goals. A successful advertisement is expected to achieve five goals such as attracting attention, commanding interest, creating desire, inspiring conviction, and provoking action. All these five functions are inter-related and in concert serve to promote the selling power of the product or person as applied to the present study. Today, we see a notable influence of advertising in every human life, because of its ways of communication. While defining the concept, a well advertising copywriter John Kenedy remarks that advertising is “salesmanship in print”. This indicates that the ultimate objective of advertising is to encourage the sell. Thus, the present study shall concern itself with the problems the linguistic forms of each word on the political billboards advertisement as well as the implicature of the words on the political billboards advertisement.

## **2.2 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

No doubt, the development of society goes hand in hand with new technologies, which in turn increases the need for advertising. Today, advertising is the essential tool for producers or candidates during electioneering campaign for political contest to not only give information about a product, service, or personality. Indeed, we are bombarded by TV and radio commercials, we see adverts in daily papers, magazines, inscriptions on public transport, and we pass billboards or small advertisement sign-posts. Many people find advertisement irritating but there are some people who are amused by them and who think more deeply how an advertisement work and what make it successful.

Again, one of the most widespread and also debated types of advertising is political advertising. For example, for human race, politics is a symbol of social survival, but for many people, it can also be a symbol of pleasure. Political advertising can become a powerful toll not only to earn money for the candidates but also to expose them for public acceptance. Thus, the aim of the present study is to give a pragmatic analysis of political billboards advertisement; and determine the effects which the linguistics dimensions of advertisement had on the target audience.

## **2.3 Methodology**

In composing this research work, field research was used to gather data. It was done by collecting data from the political advertisements in Nasarawa metropolis. The populations were some selected billboards advertisement in Nasarawa. The samples are selected billboards advertisement. Thus, In order for the researchers to obtain the result of the analysis, descriptive qualitative methods shall be used, where the data collected from the field research will be explained by the descriptions of the analysis according to the features. Thus, in counting the percentage of the data, Nawani's (150) social analysis method was applied to find the type of preposition that occur dominantly or otherwise.

## **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

The focus of this research work is on the analysis of political billboards advertisement using a pragmatic approach. For instance, Leech, (25) writes that the language of advertising belongs to the so-called 'loaded language'. He says that loaded language has the aim to change the will, opinion, or attitudes of its audience. He claims that advertising differs from other types of loaded language (such as political, journalism, and religious oratory) in having a very precise material goal-changing the mental disposition to reach the desired kind of behavior- buying a particular kind of product.

Indeed, in the modern era, competition of political post becomes very hard. In any community or nation, candidates have increased rapidly in order to satisfy the audience necessity. Every candidate contesting for political position will always try as much as possible to exhibits himself or herself through advertisement. In the words of Weilbeacher:

Everyone knows what advertising is. It figures in each of our lives every day. People see it on television, in the sky, in the matchbook comers, in newspaper, on the trash container, in magazine, in mail, on buses, and taxicabs, and on billboards.

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People hear it on radio and in supermarkets. Advertisement seems to be all around them all the time (3).

Copywriters create uncommon, surprising, interesting text with catching slogan or phrase on a billboards. The readers must give it some thought and the result is manipulation with him in order to buy product. Thus, Leech sets following principles of advertising texts: Attention value, Readability (by means of simple, personal and colloquial style), Memorability (most important in the process of advertising is to remember the name of the product) and Selling power (Leech (27)). The last principle is crucial. Ogilory (7) in his book says “I do not regard advertising as entertainment or an art form, but as a medium of information. When I write an advertisement, I don’t want you to find it so interesting that you buy the product.”

### 3. Data Presentation and Analysis

Applying pragmatic principles in advertising is perhaps one of the most crucial strategies. Indeed, the object of this analysis covers the field of advertising; and the pragmatic approach puts together all aspect of discourse analysis in relation to meaning. Thus, the pragmatic level will describe interesting examples of political billboard advertisement samples in Nasarawa metropolis in relating to overall message and its coherence to the target electorate.

Emblem as an object or symbol that represents something is a significant feature of political billboard advertisement. Indeed, all the political billboards selected for analysis have this feature. Thus, the corpus consists of selected copies of printed political billboards advertisement which were obtained from different strategic locations across Nasarawa Metropolis between August and November 2014. The copies/ samples are numbered and presented in the appendix with each copy states the name of the candidates and the positions vying for.

However, visual part of printed advertising is very important. It is usually the first element that subconsciously catches the reader’s eye. Therefore, in this case the billboard is the image of a candidate seeking for elective positions. The image or picture of the candidate dominates the whole board with inscriptions of different font sizes. This very feature is common among the selected billboards for this analysis. Pictures are printed shapes in a text and are essentially non-linguistic, but they have linguistic implication. They also attract attention and spark interest.

For example, sample (1) depicts an image of Hon. Ahmed Aliyu Wadada vying for the position of Senate. His image occupies the entire space of the board with the inscriptions to send message across to the target electorates such as “*Wadada Ikon Allah*” *Justice, Equity, Fairness, Accountability, Good Governance* written a very small font size Sample (2) contains the image of Mohammed Yarima Al-Basheer seeking for the position of the Federal House of Representative for Nasarawa/Toto Federal Constituency. The candidate wears native attire and occupies the whole board. It contains inscriptions with different font sizes as (an indispensable voice whose time has come), (My people, my passion), etc.

Sample (3) depicts the image of Reuben Audu a middle age man seeking for the position of Governor of Nasarawa State. He dressed gorgeously with different inscriptions written all over his billboards to convey his message. Such messages as (Nasarawa state...) (Endowed with diverse resources...), Time to commit our energies!!!) all these were written with different font sizes to convey the intended message to the diverse electorates. Sample (4) depicts the message and picture of a man, Solomon Ewuga vying for the position of Governor of Nasarawa state. This was also characterized by such inscriptions as (The new Dawn...), (Shared Vision), etc.

Sample (5) contains the image of an incumbent House of Representative of Nasarawa/Toto Federal Constituency, Hon Musa Baba Onwana. The billboard contains inscriptions of different fonts size to convey his message. Such inscriptions as SO FAR SO GOOD, ANOTHER VOTE FOR CONTINUITY were boldly written to attract attention of his target audience.

Sample (7) depicts the picture of an elderly man, Alh Abdullahi Adamu seeking for re-election into the house of Senate. The inscriptions on his billboards contains such message as (vote change, vote APC) these were boldly written with fairly large font sizes. Sample (8) contains the image of Chris Mamman, a middle age man seeking for the position of State Governor. The image occupies the entire board with inscriptions boldly written to convey his message to the electorates. Such inscriptions as (Mamman For Governor), (Nasarawa Deserve a Rebirth) were all written in bold to attract the attention of the target electorates.

The graphic attributes of the text complements the overall impressions of the advertisement and evokes a certain response in the reader. In some cases, the size of text is fairly large (1, 2, 4, 6, 8) and occupies predominant positions. In other cases, the font is small and result in subordinate positions (2, 4, 5, 6). Let equally take a look at the sample (3, 4) where the font size is fairly small, despite this, it has a prominent role in the overall message *“the new dawn” “Nasarawa deserves a rebirth”*

Sample (1, 3, 8) mixes two styles of fonts together to divide the message together with the placement of the writing. The first part of the clause *“Nasarawa state...”* which was written a fairly large fonts size with ellipsis complement the meaning of *“endowed with diverse resources”* and many other clauses which were written in small fonts size.

#### 4. Discussion of Findings

To persuade people to vote for a candidate is the main purpose of political billboard advertisement. Among such competitions, the candidates for various political positions want to portray him/herself as a better candidate. He/she wants to differentiate himself from others contestants. Thus political billboard advertisement must be attractive. They must catch the attention of the audience and thus identify the candidate of their choice. Therefore, Language has a powerful influence over people and their behavior. This is especially true in the field of marketing and advertising. The choice of language to convey specific messages with the intention of influencing people is vitally important. Visual content and design in advertising have a great deal on the target audience, but it is language

that helps people to identify a better candidate and remember him/her during voting exercise.

The political billboard advertisement is also discovered to be an avenue by the contestants used to appeal to emotions of the diverse electorates. This is a feature of political propaganda. The various contestants appeal to the sympathy of Nasarawa people. The following appeals are prominent in the billboards: “Be part of emancipation project 2015”, “My people my passion”, “Clarion Call 2015”, “Time to commit our energies”, *Mai rikon amana” Sai Godiya”*

In political billboards advertisement, language was used as a communicative strategy employed by advertisers to sell their candidates or client so to say, for election. Using language to achieve advertisers’ illocutionary goals or communicative strategies presupposed the use of speech act verbs with productive sequencing. For instance, informative content may be persuasive if they indicate superior performance of some candidates above others during the course of electioneering.

The researchers have equally discovered that political advertisements are used primarily to create awareness among the diverse electorates for better choice of candidate for political positions. Indeed, advertising unifies language, picture, and music. It also contain information, invokes emotions and imaginations. It can capture all five senses and besides it has social and practical aim. However, the language of advertising is not for the uneducated people as it is full of rhetorical figures and incongruity. It is highly persuasive, full of deviations, ambiguities, euphemism and ungrammatical which make language purists to frown seriously at it. However, one of the best ways the language of advertising can be eye-catching and memorable, is for it to express new ideas in ways including new violating the rules of language as long as it achieves its goals through these techniques persuasively.

The researchers also discovered that language is considered as an effective tool to reach out to diverse electorates. In other words, candidates for election convey their messages to the people, particularly the electorates within Nasarawa metropolis and beyond. Indeed, the study of language of advertising exploit natural human tendencies by situating their messages in varies social and psychological context.

## 5. Conclusion

Language of advertising belongs to the so called ‘loaded language’. Loaded language has the aim to change the will, opinions, or attitudes of its audience, (Leech, 25). Advertising differs from other forms of loaded language (such as political journalism and religious oratory) in having a very precise material goal. Thus, communication is an important feature of human life; and communication between individuals is done through the use of language. Language, as a phenomenon is a typical attribute of human beings. Communication as a process is embedded in human culture, as the society changes, the transition of culture also changes. Human being live in a complex world and without communication, man’s existence would be impossible.

Thus, advertisement is a medium of communication and expression and it effectively accomplishes the set goals. A successful advertisement is expected to achieve



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five goals such as attracting attention, commanding interest, creating desire, inspiring conviction, and provoking action. All these five functions are inter-related and in concert serve to promote the selling power of the product or person as applied to the present study. Today, we see a notable influence of advertising in every human life, because of its ways of communication. Therefore, the paper concludes that language as a phenomenon has a powerful influence over people and their behavior. This is especially true in the field of marketing and advertising. The choice of language to convey specific messages with the intention of influencing people is vitally important. Visual content and design in advertising have a great deal on the target audience, but it is language that helps people to identify a better candidate and remember him/her during voting exercise.

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## Appendix

### Sample 1



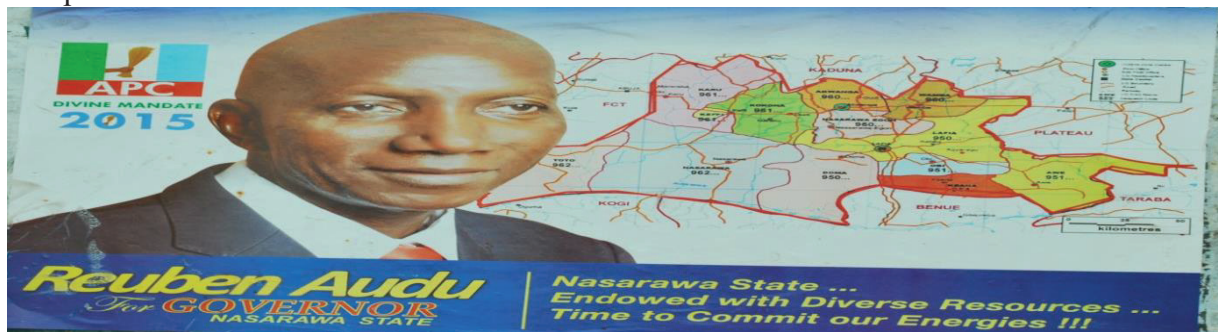
*Hon. Ahmed Aliyu Wadada vying for Nasarawa West Senatorial District 2015*

### Sample 2



*Mohammed Yerima Al-Basheer for House of Representative, Nasarawa/Toto Federal Constituency*

### Sample 3



*Reuben Audu for Governor Nasarawa State 2015*

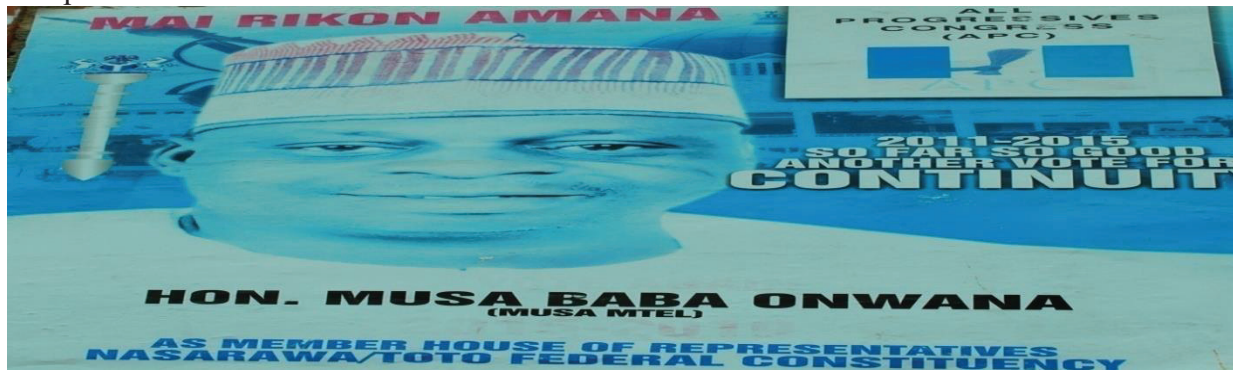
### Sample 4



*Solomon Ewuga, for Governor Nasarawa State 2015*



Sample 5



Hon. Musa Baba Onwana, for Federal House of Rep., Nasarawa/Toto Federal Constituency

Sample 6



Hon. Musa Baba Onwana, for Federal House of Rep., Nasarawa/Toto Federal Constituency

Sample 7



Senator Abdullahi Adamu, CON Sarkin Yakin Keffi Vying for Nasarawa West Senatorial District

Sample 8



Chris Mamman for Governor 2015

## **25. Aspects of Nonverbal Communication in *The Potter's Wheel***

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One of the factors that contributes to the success of any fictional text is the ability of the writer to make the story to appear as real as a real-life event as possible. In trying to achieve this feat, the writer makes the characters behave as humans do in real-life situations by speaking and displaying other aspects of nonverbal communication as people do. The paper explores some aspects of nonverbal communication used by Professor Vincent Chukwuemeka Ike in narrating the story-line in *The Potter's Wheel* (henceforth abbreviated as TPW). TPW is the major source of data for this study. Additional materials that were sourced for this work are reflected in the body of this piece and as they will also appear in the references. Our major finding tallies with the position of scholars such as Hudson, Poynton, Elugbe and Jowitt (in Faniran 2005:24-25) that the overall meaning of a fictional text cannot be realized from the linguistic channel alone because there are extra-verbal, that is nonverbal elements, within the text which complement the linguistic medium. In other words, the nonverbal aspects of any work of fiction should also be considered as one reads through it to get a full understanding of the work.

**Key Words:** *aspects, nonverbal communication, potter's wheel*

### **Introduction**

This work is divided into six major parts, viz. introduction which deals with the prefatory aspect of the work. Synopsis of the plot of TPW is the second part of this study. The review of literature looks at the discussion of nonverbal communication in the works of Faniran (2005) and Ahmad (2011). The fourth part of this work looks at six aspects of nonverbal communication in TPW. In part five of this discourse, we will look at combination of the various types of nonverbal communication as enacted by some characters in the text under consideration. In the concluding part, we bring the work to a close.

Hybels and Weaver II (1998:6) have defined communication as “any process in which people share information, ideas and feeling. It involves not only the spoken and written words, but also body language, personal mannerism and style, the physical environment – anything that adds meaning to [a] message”.

Payne (2001:100) says nonverbal communication is communication without the use of words. It “relies on gestures, body movement, facial expression ...; even silence.”



Nonverbal communication can also be defined as the “attributes or actions of humans, other than the use of words themselves, which have socially shared meaning, are intentionally sent or interpreted as intentional, are consciously sent or consciously received, and have the potential for feedback from the receiver”. (Burgoon and Swaine, 1978:9-10).

### A Synopsis of the Plot

The major message of TPW to the readers is that education is the best instrument for societal transformation. But for it to play the transformational role in society, the educated must possess commonsense and be hardworking. The 256-page book treats the story of Obu, who, undoubtedly, is a very brilliant boy that needs to match his intellectual endowments with some common sense and hardwork. At the age of nine, he sleeps while his father goes to the farm, he bed-wets and organizes the *Mgbedike* masquerade with his friends while his all-female siblings return home from the farm with their head loads of yam (pp. 20-22). Obu does these and more because he enjoys his mother’s full backing. When Mazi Laza, Obu’s father, sends him to go and remind his father’s friends in the neighbouring houses that the feast initially slated for his compound will hold that afternoon, Obu’s mother asks some of his daughters to go on the errand while Obu goes away to meet Oti, one of his playmates waiting for Obu (pp. 59-61). At last, Obu’s father decides to send him to Teacher Zaccheus at Aka where he will continue his educational pursuits and be trained by the disciplinarian Teacher and his wife.

After spending just one academic session in Teacher’s house, it becomes obvious, on returning to Umuchukwu on holiday, that Obu has been transformed for the better. He goes on errands voluntarily; he goes to the stream to take his bath and fetches some water for domestic use. When his father returns from a journey, Obu goes to take the bicycle and parks it at the appropriate corner in the house.

On his mother’s instigation, Obu appears to have settled for the idea of not going back to stay in Teacher’s house at Aka, but when his father tells him that he has been sent there to be moulded into a better person later in life, Obu returns to Teacher’s house at the Aka CMS Central School on January 14, 1944.

### Some Theoretical Issues

Faniran (2005:23-30) has looked at objectics or object language and kinesics as they are illustrated in Chinua Achebe’s *A Man of the People*. In his handling of objectics, Faniran narrows his discussion to dressing. In looking at kinesics in *A Man of the People*, Faniran identifies and discusses:

- a. waving the hand or using the fan to wave at one’s admirers;
- b. hugging of one’s conversational partner;
- c. shaking of the fists at an object;
- d. yawning accompanied by clasping of the hands above one’s head as a mark of fatigue or boredom – a clear indication that one is itching to depart from a place and take rest somewhere;

- e. leg shaking as an indication that one wants to have an amorous relationship with one's partner;
- f. when one comes across an abominable object or situation, one circles one's head with the left hand and snaps two of the fingers making a *piam* sound towards the object in question, and
- g. lip-biting by a male character as a mark of sorrow or regret at a wrong act inadvertently committed.

In "The Use of Nonverbal Communication in Abubakar Gimba's *Witnesses to Tears*", Ahmad (2011:1-7) discusses the following as aspects of nonverbal communication in *Witnesses to Tears*:

- a. Silence;
- b. Paralanguage;
- c. Chronemics (how humans communicate through their use of time).
- d. Environment;
- e. Kinesics;
- f. Touch, and
- g. Dress.

### Aspects of Nonverbal Communication in TPW

Let us begin our discussion of nonverbal communication in TPW by drawing the readers attention to one fact – all quotations that will be used as examples to substantiate our arguments will be drawn from the 2011 (UTME = Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination) edition of the book.

Aspects of nonverbal communication to be examined from TPW will be broadly divided into two, *viz.*: (a) those types of nonverbal communication that come as single ones as enacted by some of the characters; and (b) combinations of the various types as displayed by the characters.

For single nonverbal forms of communication, we have: (1) Kinesics, (2) Demonstrative Communication (songs), (3) Body Marks, (4) paralanguage (5) Objectics and (6) Instrumental Communication.

### Kinesics

The study of posture, body movement gestures, and facial expressions is called *kinesics*, a word got from the Greek word *kinesis* which means movement. (Pearson, Nelson, Titsworth and Harter, 2003:108).

Colman (2003:392) says kinesics refers to the study of the role of gestures and other body movements in nonverbal communication. Gestures could be classified into: *emblems* (gestures that substitute for words, such as waving the hand for 'goodbye' or putting a forefinger to the lips for 'silence'); *illustrators* (gestures that accompany speech and depict what is being said, such as moving the hands apart to illustrate the description of a big fish); *adaptors* (gestures that involve self-touching that help one to cope with

emotional reactions such as covering the eyes with shock or putting a hand over the mouth with surprise); and *regulators* (gestures that accompany speech and help to coordinate turn-taking, including raising the hand in the air to indicate that one has not finished speaking). *Affect displays* are facial expressions that convey emotional states.

When Mary's fiancé, a businessman, visits Teacher to know if Mary is imbibing the training she is receiving from Madam, Teacher sends Silence, one of his domestic servants, on an errand to buy three bottles of beer from Dianah's shop. Shortly before going to the shop, Silence had read Teacher's facial expression that he should depart their presence only to come back thereafter and give a reason for not buying the gift. True to type, Silence returns after a while to say that the 'man who sells beer for Dianah has been conscripted into the army, and she has not found another person to take his place. The shop is locked, and there is nobody to open it for me'. (TPW, pp. 182-183). The guest departs shortly without the bottles of beer chewing part of the large kolanut he gets from Teacher, his host.

### **Demonstrative Communication (Songs)**

Akpabio (2003 in Ogwezzy 2010:134) posits that there are two main types of demonstrative communication – music and signals. Dance can also be considered to be an aspect of demonstrative communication because certain dance steps communicate too.

Song is an aspect of demonstrative communication. (Ogwezzy 2010:135-136). As part of Oramedia, it is used in the African context to celebrate the marriage of a couple, the birth and naming of a baby and to teach morals to members of the community. The most pervasive function that songs perform in society is entertainment. Out of the thirteen (13) instances of the use of songs by the characters in TPW, we have decided to cite four (4) for illustrative purpose.

Deborah Onuekwucha, also addressed as 'Madam' by her househelps, is the wife of Teacher Zacchaeus Kanu. As a young girl, she has features which mark her out as a future non-nonsense and strong lady. While in school she had no friends. Moreover, she could throw anyone – boy or girl – that dares engage her in a scuffle; and so, she is dreaded by all. At the age of six, 'her granite heart had become clearly evident'. The song composed to portray her disposition says:

Deborah, whoever takes you as wife  
Will shrug his shoulders- *Kponkwem!*  
(TPW, pp. 76-77).

*Kponkwem* is an Onomatopoeia describing the shrugging of the shoulders.

The sound of the lorry taking Obu to Teacher's house in Aka evokes a song in the passengers. It is rendered below:

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*Ojolima elugo Umuoji, ka m'na, Ojolima elugo Ojoto, ka m'na,  
Ojolima olugo Oraifite, ka m'na n'ike, agwum – O.*

‘(The) Ojolima (song) has come to Umoji (town), let me go, Ojolima has come to Ojoto, let me go,  
Ojolima has come to Oraifite, let me go for  
I’m fagged out.’  
(TPW, p. 102).

The song is meant to keep the passengers lively and to bear the rigours of the journey occasioned by the discomfiting nature of the vehicle, the bad state of the road and the distance they have to cover.

After returning from school or workplace and attending to their domestic chores, Teacher’s househelps decide to engage in proverb and riddle contests. As the show goes on, one of them fouls the air. When it becomes clear that the culprit will not own up and apologise to the others, Silence secures a broomstick, breaks a piece nearly a foot long, sticks one end of it to his jaw and starts singing the song that will invoke the *Tutuntu*, the invisible detective that will expose the culprit:

*Tutuntu choba onye nyulu aro,  
Choba!*

*Tutuntu choba onye nyulu aro,  
Choba!*

Tutuntu, find out who fouled the air,  
Find him!

Tutuntu, find out who fouled the air,  
Find him!

(TPW, pp. 172-173).

At last, it becomes clear that it is Silence that farts!

During the celebration of Empire Day, teachers and pupils of Aka CMS Central School are well dressed and the school band will be at hand to entertain the guests, including the Resident, his wife and other officials. One of the numbers that is rendered at the occasion is:

*Home again - again!  
Home again – again!  
When shall I see my home?  
(Darling, darling, darling)*

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*When shall I see my native land?  
I will never forget my home!*

(TPW, p. 204).

### Body Marks

Both artificial and natural marks on the body serve some communicative purposes. Looking at the facial marks won by some people, one can correctly guess which part of Nigeria they come from. The Igala speakers mostly found in the eastern flank of Kogi State wear three horizontal marks on each side of the mouth and one vertical line on each cheek. It is the view of Eluyemi (1987:48) that the cheek marks, which vary both in form and function, often go a long way to indicate the history and origin and migration of people on the African continent. Johnson (1959:105-106) has distinguished about twenty four different types of cheek marks among the Yoruba of Nigeria. Eluyemi (1975:33) has suggested that the Nupe (cheek) marks might have had their origin in Ile Ife in present Osun State, Nigeria.

Examples of body marks that we shall take from TPW shortly are either natural and therefore permanent or artificial and likely to fade with time. Some people who are knowledgeable in African (Igbo) traditional medicine have informed Mama Obu that the short, vertical line which appeared to have been deliberately carved on Obu marks him out as *Ogbanje* (a child who is born into the world over and over again). It is said that the mark has been made on him by the last family to which he is born over and over when they found him out. With such mark accompanying him to the grave, he could not return to the same family lest the mark exposes him as an *Ogbanje*. (TPW, pp. 42-43).

In the course of a fight, Ogechukwu bites Obu on one of the arms as a result of which 'A little mound had grown on the spot, bounded by the imprint of Ogechukwu's teeth'. (TPW, p. 84).

Teacher gives Monday, one of the househelps, the beating of his life because the latter inadvertently blows one of Teacher's bicycle tyres in the process of pumping it. The beating leaves 'mounds on Monday's body.' (TPW, pp. 129-131).

For stealing a piece of meat from Madam's pot of stew, Obu gets heavily beaten at school and each of the twelve strokes administered on him 'resembled the path left by an earthworm burrowing through wet ground.' (TPW:189-197).

### Paralanguage

*Para* is a Greek word for beside, near or beyond. So, *paralanguage* means 'alongside the words or language.' It deals with how something is said and not what is said. Paralinguistic features include the non-word sounds and non-word characteristics of language such as pitch, volume, rate and quality. (Knapp, 1978:18 and Ahmad, 2004:23).

Examples of non-word sounds from TPW include:

*Sh... sh ... sh* (p. 20).

*Hm ...* (p. 43)



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Exclamations such as:

*Hey!* (p. 113)

*Che-i!* (p. 172)

*Ewo!* (p. 186)

*Jinede – me – h!* (from *Jinedemeh* literally meaning ‘my yams and cocoyams. It is a corruption of the exclamation – *chinekem eh!* ‘O my God!’) (p. 196).

Onomatopoeic expressions such as *Whoom! Whoom!* (TPW, p. 55) and *gbo-gom, gbo-gom, gbo-gom*, the popular sounds made by bells (p. 146), are also aspects of paralanguage.

### Objectics

Objectics, or object language, is the study of the human use of clothing and other artifacts as nonverbal codes. Apart from serving as a source of covering and protection for the body, the clothes we put on can indicate the type of job that we perform, the social status of the wearer and even the mental state – the level of sanity or insanity – of an individual. Artifacts are ornaments such as jewelry, hairstyles, cosmetics, automobiles, watches, shoes, glasses we display that hold communicative potential. (Pearson, Nelson, Titsworth and Harter, 2003:121).

While trying to locate Standard 2 class at the Aka CMS Central School, Obu runs into a pupil who carries a pad on his head as if he was waiting for a load to place on the pad. Obu later discovered that it is the distinguishing mark of any pupil who ‘carried his class’ by taking the last position in the preceding year’s Annual Examination. Such ‘carriers of their various classes’ were required to carry pads on their heads throughout the first week of resumption so that other less serious pupils would be made to sit up, work hard and be saved the same type of embarrassing treatment. (TPW, 117).

Apart from the body mark which *Ogbanje* children bear on their bodies, they also have peculiar pebbles on which is inscribed how long the owner will live before his death. To prevent Obu from dying on his ninth birthday, Mama Obu invites Nwomiko, the Awa Woman and an *Ogbanje* expert to unearth her son’s *Ogbanje* stone from somewhere in Mazi Laza’s compound. (TPW, pp. 44-46).

### Instrumental Communication

In the African traditional society, instrumental devices are some of the items used for music. Every ethnic group in Africa has instrumental devices that are peculiar to them, used for producing varieties of music which serve different communication functions. (Ogwezzy 2010:94-95). Examples of instrumental communication devices from TPW can be categorized under **aerophones** and **idiophones**.

### Aerophone

Ibagere (1994:91) says that aerophones are:

... musical instruments which produce sound as a result of the vibration of a column of air which is forced through a kind of pipe. It is the mouth that is usually used to force this air through the instrument. The aerophones include instruments such as the flute family, reed pipes, horns, trumpet and other such kinds.

Mazi Lazarus Maduabuchi, Obu's father, uses his unique bicycle horn which makes a *po-pu po-pu po-o-pu! Po-pu po-pu po-o-pu!* sound accompanied by the *egwu na amu* (fun and laughter) and *Obi sala sala* (carefree cheerfulness) to announce the arrival of the popular Umuchukwu cloth dealer at any of the local markets that he goes to sell his wares. (TPW pp. 5-6). When once Obu and Ogechukwu are engaged in a fierce fight while their parents are away, it is the *po-pu po-pu po-pu po-o-pu! Po-pu po-pu po-o-pu!* sound made by Mazi's bicycle horn accompanied by '*Egwu na amu*' and *Obi sala, sala!* that bring the scuffle to an end. (TPW, pp. 87-89).

On account of having more than the required number of pupils in Standard 2, 'We Shall See', Obu's teacher, tells five of the pupils in his class that the visiting Education Officer will be annoyed with him and the headmaster for having more than the government stipulated number of pupils in class. To avoid the scolding and embarrassment from the visiting superior officer, 'We Shall See' tells the extra five to run into the nearby bush the moment they hear two blasts on the whistle to be done by the headmaster. The headmaster, on sighting the car conveying the Education Officer in the school premises, blows the whistle twice and the five pupils run into the nearby bush. (TPW, pp. 174-175, 178).

### Idiophones

Idiophones are self-founding instruments which produce sound without the addition or use of an intermediary medium. (Osho, 2010:159). Ibagere (1994:91) says idiophones are a 'group of self-sounding instruments which produce sound when they are struck, scratched, or shaken. The sound they produce is of a different kind from those of other instruments. In this group are all the different sizes and shapes of gongs, woodblocks, wooden drums, bell rattles, earthenware drums, and all other related instruments'.

David plays the two-toned *Ogene* (gong) along with other musical instruments that add colour to the outing of the *Mgbedike* as Obu and others move around the village with their masquerade. (TPW, pp. 54-57).

The catechist's first bell for pre-dawn prayers at 5.00 a.m. helps to also wake the servants in Teacher's house up from sleep as they prepare to do some domestic chores. At 5.30 a.m. when the second bell is rung for prayers, 'the servants whose turn it was to fetch water [for use in the house] were already half- way to the one-mile distant stream ...'. (TPW, p. 128). At the Aka CMS Central School, the bell for the midday

recess is rung at midday from the headmaster's office. The moment the bell goes, all the pupils move out of their classes for break and relaxation. (TPW, pp. 146-147).

We now turn to look at combination of two or more of non-verbal communication as enacted by characters of TPW. When Nwoniko goes to Mazi Laza's house to *deogbanjelise* Obu, we see a number of nonverbal aspects of human communication at play. We have noted earlier that Obu bears a peculiar scar – a short vertical line – on his left cheek which marks him out as an *Ogbanje*. When Nwomiko comes face-to-face with Obu, the latter starts crying thereby confirming the former's suspicion that her client is, for sure, an *Ogbanje*. Nwomiko says: 'This looks an obvious case.' (TPW, p. 46). (*Paralinguistics*).

Nwomiko goes ahead to examine both the right and left palms of Obu after which she says: 'Yes, he certainly is [an *Ogbanje*]. (TPW, p. 46). (*Body Marks*)

The removal and display of the *Ogbanje* stone by Nwomiko to *deogbanjelise* Obu, as noted earlier, is another aspect of nonverbal aspect of the interaction between the *Ogbanje* expert and Obu. (TPW, p. 48). (*Objectics*).

That Obu goes into a long sleep lasting several hours, in line with Nwomiko's prediction, after the unearthing of the *Ogbanje* stone, is another aspects of nonverbal communication – *Silence*. (TPW, p. 48).

Madam opens her pot of soup and discovers that the coat of oil which normally remains sealed after the oil has gone cold has been penetrated – the soup has been tempered with - probably one of the pieces of meat therein has been stolen. In addition, odour from the pot (consider *Olfactory communication* = aspects of communication that deals with smell as an aspect of nonverbal communication) confirms Madam's suspicion that the soup has gone sour. On counting the pieces of meat in the pot with a wooden ladle three times, she discovers that a piece is missing from the eight pieces remaining in the soup the previous night. (TPW, p. 189) (*Kinesics*).

When the case is reported to Teacher and he tries to make the culprit confess to the theft, it is discovered that Obu's big toe has soot collected from outside of the pot of soup. (*Body mark*). Obu's attempt to wipe the soot off his toe gives him up as the one that steals the meat from the pot of soup. (TPW, p. 191). (*Kinesics*).

## Conclusion

The work has essentially discussed aspects of nonverbal communication in TPW. For the sake of clarity, the aspects were divided into two, viz: single ones as enacted by the characters and cases whereby a combination of two or more aspects of nonverbal communication that come into play as the characters interact in the text. In the latter case, we see a combination of various aspects of nonverbal communication as Nwomiko goes to Mazi Laza's house to cure Obu of his *Ogbanjehood*. Yet, when Obu steals a piece of meat from Madam's pot of soup, we also see that a combination of various aspects of nonverbal communication come into play in the text.

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## **26. Metaphor: A Tool in every Hand**

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Metaphor is a subtle but an invaluable gift of nature to man for understanding himself, others and his world (Okpe 2014). It is pervasive in the language we speak and as Lakoff and Johnson (1980) posit, metaphor is a conceptual phenomenon that manifests not only in the language we speak but informs the way we think and act. Metaphor therefore, is a symbiosis of three different dimensions - thought, language and action. Different scholars view this subject based on their professional inclinations. For example, to Aristotle, it is the singular gift of the artist, while to some others, it is an ornamental tool used for rhetorical purposes. The views that situate metaphor within the literary plain were debunked by Lakoff and Johnson's emancipatory work which delineates the subject as a cognitive endowment that manifests through our different modes of operations. The cognitivists argue that metaphor is not an exclusive possession of the literary artists as earlier views posit, but a gift possessed and used by all – as metaphor appears in the works of both literary and non-literary writers. Popping on the cognitivists' model, the paper elucidates the subject of metaphor, mirroring it as a gift possessed and used by all but argues further that, it is a creative tool that can bring about novelty in the humdrum of our everyday ordinary language and can extend the boundary of what can be expressed with language. Through metaphor, speakers or language users can give value to debased linguistic currency.

### **1. Introduction**

The subject of metaphor from antiquity has been a very fascinating one to different scholars with each one delineating it from his professional inclination and interest. This accounts for the diverse views that abound on this phenomenon. Noting this fact, Omoniwa (1993:5) christens metaphor as a 'controversial and a multi-faceted subject' that has aroused the attention of several scholars with overlapping interests for centuries. Upholding Coleridge's dictum in Hawkes (1972:34) that, 'everyone is born either a Platonist or an Aristotelian'; Nacey (2013:9) affirms that this distinction holds very true in the field of metaphor. This presupposes that everyone has a place in metaphor and conversely, metaphor has a room in everyone. To further stretch the point, more recent studies on metaphor have revealed that metaphor is pervasive in language and as such, going by Descartes' (Fromkin and Rodman 1974:180) argument, that every normal human being possesses the gift of language, as he states:

It is a very remarkable fact that there are none so depraved and stupid, without even accepting idiots, that they cannot arrange different words together, forming of them a statement by which they make known their thoughts...

Then, everyone who uses language has a reservoir of metaphor embedded in his cognitive and linguistic repertoire.



## **2. Metaphor from the Traditional Perspective**

The earliest views on metaphor situated it within the literary domain or as a rhetorical device used for embellishment in order to achieve aestheticism in literary works. To Aristotle whose writings are considered the origin of theorizing around the trope, metaphor is the singular gift of the poet (by inference, the artist) as well as the most important and dynamic trope. Metaphor to Aristotle (1965:61) is “the application to one thing of a name belonging to another”. In his view, it is limited to and suitable in certain settings – primarily the poetic environment. He sets aside what he tags ‘ordinary language’, that is to say, non-metaphorical expressions as the best means to achieve clarity. He precludes an overuse of metaphor in ordinary prose to avoid making it too lyrical or flowery.

Aristotelian tradition is at the basis of the classical views on metaphor such as the substitution and comparison dimensions. In summary, the substitution view entails saying one thing and meaning another, that is, ‘A equals B’ or ‘A is the same as B’. On the other hand, the comparison view sees metaphor as an elliptical simile – a collapsed comparison from which ‘like’ or ‘as’ has been omitted for convenience or heightened interest. The summary of the Aristotelian perspective is that everyday language is ‘ordinary’ or literal and that metaphor is a detachable poetic ornament exclusively meant for the genius or the literary artists.

Leech (1969:49) is another scholar who cites his view on the importance of metaphor within the poetic domain. As he observes, metaphor is by far the most important single factor in that transcendence of the normal resources of communication by which he describes poetic language. He further says, ‘so important an element of poetic language is it that poets and critics alike have tended to consider it the only thing that really matters in poetry’.

## **3. The Platonist Angle on Metaphor**

On the contrary, the Platonist school of thought posits that metaphor and language are inseparable. There are several rhizomatic theories springing from this stem which according to Nacey (2013:10), are either premised on Semantics or Pragmatics. Furthermore, that either metaphor is an expression and a product of semantic interpretation or metaphor is an outcome of what is communicated and a product of pragmatic interpretation. The two views are championed by Black and Searle respectively. For instance, Black’s (1981) ‘interaction view’ proposes that metaphor emerges as a result of interaction or association between a primary and secondary subject. The interaction between the primary (literal) subject and the secondary (figurative) subject brings about metaphor creation. Searle at the other end postulates that metaphor delineation is a pragmatic concern rather than semantics. When a hearer notices the inherent contradiction between speaker meaning and sentence meaning, he is left with no other option than to seek for the non-literal interpretation which could be metaphor, metonymy, or irony. The relevance theory is also classified under the pragmatic perspective.

## **4. The Conceptual Approach**

As already noted, there are divergent views on the subject of metaphor but the discussion in the earliest time was dominated by the literary views which tended to

overshadow the linguistic angle. Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Lakoff and Turner (1989), Casnig (2000) and a host of other linguists are among the linguists who charted the path of linguistic dimension to the discussion of metaphor.

Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual approach to the study of metaphor is a strong negation of the traditional view that sees metaphor as an ornamental device in the hands of literary artists used in rhetorical style. Contemporary studies have shown that literary artists do not have monopoly of this indispensable tool that is so entrenched in our way of life (Okpe, 2009). Several cognitive linguists like Turner, Kovecses and Fungerer and Schmid strongly establish this view in their works. For example, Fungerer and Schmid (1996:114) observe that 'even very young children are very apt at using figurative language'.

Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) work on the conceptual metaphor was a revolution that gave metaphor a new focus since its publication in the linguistic academic milieu. According to these linguists, metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. That is to say, our ordinary conceptual system, which determines our thinking and acting, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. Cognitivists believe that the concepts that control or determine our thought are not just matters of the intellect. By extension, metaphors are not just a way of expressing ideas through language, but a way of thinking about things. Lakoff and Johnson demonstrate this fact with the metaphor *Time is money*. In their view, we do not just exploit this metaphor linguistically, but in real sense, we think of, or conceptualize 'Time' in terms of 'money'. With the following examples, they buttress their stance that we think of 'time' as a valuable asset or limited resource that can be spent.

- i. You're wasting my time.
- ii. Can you give me a few minutes?
- iii. How do you spend your time?
- iv. We are running out of time.
- v. Is that worth your while?

*(Culled from Lakoff and Johnson 1980:7 but slightly modified by Okpe 2012).*

Okpe (2009) concludes that these phrases are typical utterances that we make from time to time without realizing that the power of metaphor is being evoked. These and similar utterances show that conceptual metaphors are entrenched in our cognitive system. Also, Lakoff and Turner (1989:38) note that general conceptual metaphors are not 'the unique creation of individual poets but are rather part of the way members of a culture have of conceptualizing their experience.' According to Bromelow (2008:89), conceptual metaphors are the umbrella ideas, which are rarely explicitly expressed, but nonetheless are accepted and shared by the whole community of language users. They are shared and shareable thought processes, which we use so unconsciously, automatically, typically unnoticed, freely or effortlessly and conventionally. Fungerer and Schmid (1996), however, observe that, although metaphor is a conceptual phenomenon, we access the metaphors that structure our way of thinking through the instrument of language.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) tie the understanding of metaphor to experience. For example, they say, 'a metaphor can serve as a vehicle for understanding a concept only by virtue of its experiential basis. (p.18). Their experientialist approach to metaphor came full blown in subsequent works in 1987 and 1992. This approach emphasizes the connection between language, thought and experience. Concerning the experientialists, Ruiz (2009:69) observes:

For these scholars, experience is understood in an ample way as it includes perception, sensorimotor aspects, emotional, historical, social and linguistic dimensions, and above all, the inner structure of the human body – genetically and experientially acquired -, and the nature of its interactions in both the physical, socio-cultural, political and economic environments...

As Ruiz (in Medubi 2009) further notes, in the perception of experientialism, knowledge is not objective but dependent on and influenced by the ability to manipulate and move objects, on the mind, the culture and one's interaction with the environment. On this premise we can conclude that the creation and perception of metaphor are possible because of the shared conceptual system and experience between the 'creator' and 'perceiver' (of metaphor).

Metaphor is rooted in thought not just in language, as Lakoff opines, but human thoughts, according to Medubi (2009:3), 'are conceived based on bodily experience and imagination, among other things'. Experience, in turn, forms the basis for the construction of concepts. This means that conceptualization is a mental process that is knit to bodily experience. This accounts for why Lakoff and Johnson (1980) insist that parts of a metaphor are linked through an experiential basis and that it is only by means of these experiential bases that the metaphor can serve the purpose of understanding. Metaphor also plays a central role in constructing realities; that is, charting new paths.

The essence of metaphor, according to these linguists, is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another. To do this, they propose the theory of conceptual mapping. Saeed (2003: 348) from a semantic posture refutes the traditional view of metaphor as many other contemporary linguists, arguing that metaphor is 'far from being idiosyncratic anomalies'. He enumerates the characteristics and systematic features of metaphor as *conventionality*, *systematicity*, *asymmetry* and *abstraction*. The subject of conventionality has to do with the novelty of the metaphor and the question of dead metaphors. It is believed that some metaphors are fossilized or 'dead' and do no longer retain their metaphorical effect when used. According to Lakoff and Turner (1989:55), conventionalization is the extent to which a metaphor underlies a range of everyday linguistic expression. That is to say, it is conventional to the extent that it is automatic, effortless, and generally established as a mode of thought among the members of a linguistic community. Cognitivists believe that 'even familiar metaphors can be given new life, thus showing that they retain their metaphorical status' (Saeed 2003:348). The idea of 'dead' metaphor is completely rejected by this view.

Systematicity of metaphor shows that metaphor does not just set up a single point of comparison: In comparison, features of the source domain and the target domain are married to create an extension, thereby establishing an internal logic for the metaphor under consideration. Chains of connections are made or shown in the mapping process.

For example, *life is a journey* (Lakoff's example) involves several slots in the schema such as:

- The person leading a life is a traveller.
- His purposes are destinations.
- The means for achieving purposes are routes.
- Difficulties in life are impediments to travel.
- Counsellors are guides.
- Progress is the distance travelled.
- Things you gauge your progress by are landmarks.
- Material resources and talents are provisions (for the journey).

The point is, the idea of seeing life as a journey with the mapping shown above underlies other expressions we make every day; for example, *'I must give my child a good start in life'*, *'He has come to a dead end in his career'*, and so on. This concept of *'life is a journey'* works as system that gives birth to other expressions that are tailored along that thought pattern. Also when new vocabulary is created, it is the *systematicity* of metaphor at work. For example; *'computer virus'* is a term created from the biological virus that infects animate beings. It is the extension of meaning that gave birth to that word.

The third feature, *asymmetry*, refers to the directional nature of metaphors. Metaphors do not set up a symmetrical comparison between two concepts, thereby establishing points of similarity. Rather they stimulate the listener to transfer features from the source to the target domain. The transfer of feature is from source to target domain and not – vice versa. For example, Life is a Journey or Health is Wealth cannot be Journey is life or Wealth is health.

The last feature in this category is abstraction. According to Giannoni (2009), metaphorization entails an invaluable resource for expressing abstract concepts by analogy with everyday experience. It is observed that a typical metaphor uses a more concrete source domain to describe a more abstract domain. We understand abstract concepts through the concrete and, as Alm-Arvius (2008) also affirms, through metaphorical extension we understand more abstract matters or new phenomena by identifying them in some respects with parts of another, usually concrete, source domain.

## 5. The Universality of Metaphor

Any discussion on the aspect of universality in metaphor cannot ignore the cognitive linguistic theory of metaphor developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in their book *Metaphor We Live By*. Their work tore the veil and flung the door open for light to flood into the contemporary perception of metaphor. It is indispensable to the discussion of many aspects of metaphor in our time. No wonder, Okpe (2013) calls it emancipatory. This theory has clearly shown (as earlier exemplified) that metaphor is a universal phenomenon.

Nacey (2013:19) attests to the fact that metaphorical reasoning is universal, as are many conceptual metaphors. And as clearly shown by Lakoff and Johnson, what we call 'conceptual metaphors' are largely or mostly universal. Kovecses (2014:65) on

universality in metaphor opines that several unrelated languages may share several conceptual metaphors for particular emotion concepts. For example, 'Happiness'. There are a number of conceptual metaphors for *happiness* in English and many other unrelated languages share the same as English. 'Happiness is up' metaphor is shown to be the same for Chinese and Hungarian. The same expression exists in many African languages especially Nigerian languages.

Kovecses observes that English, Chinese and Hungarian belong to very different language families and represent very different cultures of the world which presumably did not have much contact with each other when those conceptual metaphors evolved. The simple truth is that, as cognitive linguists like Grady (1997) and Kovecses (2002) claim, 'simple' or 'primary' metaphors are motivated by universal correlations in bodily experience. This accounts for the similarities in conceptual metaphors across cultures and languages. *Happiness is Up* metaphor is a generic - level metaphor. Metaphors at this level tend to be universal or near universal.

In another study, Okpe and Onjewu (2014) explicate the relatedness of conceptual metaphoric expressions in Idoma and English. The study shows the shared metaphoric expressions between these languages. They include:

- Life is a stage = *Eche w' ijah*.
- Life is a swing (or pendulum) = *Eche w' unee*.
- Time waits for no one = *Eko gbeyi oche no*.

As these scholars note, Idoma and English are two distinct languages that are geographically far apart and from different language families and cultures. Idoma is a sub-branch of Niger-Kordofanian family; while English is a descent of the Indo-European family- belonging to the Germanic branch, precisely, the West Germanic subgroup. There was no record of any contact between Idoma and English in the early time. The similarities shown buttress the fact of the common linguistic traits inherent in world languages. The nature of metaphor, these scholars observe, that is, as a cognitive phenomenon residing in thought and action, not only in words, makes it that several unrelated languages share different types of metaphoric views on concepts and things generally.

## 6. Metaphor and Creativity

The role of metaphor as a creative tool has been emphasized by many linguists. It is an indispensable instrument in giving value to debased linguistic currency. And as Okpe (2012) emphasized, 'for anyone who wants to avoid the humdrum element in communication, metaphor is a basic antidote'. Creativity entails emerging with what is new, valuable, original, illuminating, exciting (sometimes, surprising), novel or unconventional, thought-provoking and so on. Creativity as Nacey (op.cit) says, 'is not the prerogative of artists, poets and musicians alone, but within reach of all of us'.

Creative manifestation is realized through manipulation of linguistic form like rhyme, word play, metaphor and other tropes. Metaphor and creativity go *pari-passu* in deliberate attempts to produce certain effects. A deliberate use of metaphor gives birth to the 'creative', not the 'expressive', power of metaphor showing forth. One sure way to bring out the creative tendency inherent in man and create new realities is by metaphor.



## 7. Conclusion

The cognitivists' perspective has clearly shown the relationship between metaphor, thought, language and experience and these are processes or elements that every human being is naturally endowed with. They are not idiosyncratic possessions of the artists but gifts for all. As such, metaphor is embedded in everyone and can be used by everyone to chart new paths thereby creating realities.

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## **27. Stylistic Peculiarities of Public Speeches**

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This work is a comparative study of the inaugural speeches of the Nigerian and the US Presidents, Goodluck Jonathan and Barak Obama, respectively. The speeches are closely studied comparatively at the graphological, syntactic, lexico-semantic, and phonological levels. The research findings show that the two speeches exhibit similar phonological patterns in terms of alliteration; similar syntactic structures in terms of fronted adverbials and noun phrase structure but not in terms of parallelism, and different lexico-semantic features.

### **Introduction**

Language is, perhaps, the most important instrument available to human beings. With it, human are able to understand others' feelings or thoughts, and able to make themselves understood to others. This instrument can be utilized to achieve a variegated number of functions ranging from organizing, gossiping, story-telling, disseminating information, to disorganizing, fomenting trouble or declaring war, making peace, expressing love and so on. However, language can be manipulated such that the way it is used communicates as much as the content of an expression does. In other words, the way an expression is delivered can make or mar its content. Both the form (content) and the style (manner of expression) combine to make the meaning of an expression. In this paper, our concern is on the style of the inaugural speeches of the US and the Nigerian Presidents, Barak Obama and Goodluck Ebele Jonathan respectively.

### **Methodology**

This study is conducted by selecting the second inaugural speech of Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan, delivered on his assumption of office on May 29, 2011, and the second inaugural speech of US President Barak Obama, delivered on January 21, 2013. The choice of their second inaugural speeches is necessitated by the fact that they are their most recent inaugural speeches. The styles of the two speeches are then compared side by side from the perspective of graphology, phonology, syntax and lexico-semantics.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Just as applicable to many concepts in linguistics, it is difficult to give the term 'stylistics' an all-encompassing definition. It is this difficulty that makes stylistics a subject of different (but sometimes good) definitions. We can rely on Paul Simpson's definition. After discarding the prejudiced views on the subject of stylistics, he maintains that

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... stylistics is interested in language as a function of texts in context, and it acknowledges that utterances (literary or otherwise) are produced in a time, a place, and in a cultural and cognitive context. These 'extra-linguistic' parameters are inextricably tied up with the way a text 'means'. The more complete and context-sensitive the description of language, then the fuller the stylistic analysis that accrues (3).

This perception reveals that stylistics rather examines the function of language (texts) within the framework of its use, and, in doing this examination, the spatial, temporal, cultural and cognitive contexts must all be brought under focus. Therefore, to engage in stylistics is to explore language, and, more specifically, to explore creativity in language use (Simpson 3).

To Chapman, stylistics investigates 'the language adopted to meet peculiarities of situations, attitudes and relationships in specific linguistic acts' (135). This means that stylistics deals with different dimensions in which a language can be used to meet meaning relation in a certain discourse. Many early definitions of stylistics view it as a linguistic endeavour in the appreciation of a literary work. For instance, Widdowson sees it "as the study of literary discourse from linguistic orientation" (3). One thing that is common to most of these definitions is acknowledging the fact that stylistics is a linguistic endeavour whether it is applied to a literary text or a non-literary text (after all, literature is language in practice). In vividly capturing the essence of stylistics, Crystal and Davy observe that stylistics examines language habit in discourse with the main purpose of identifying, from the general linguistic features, certain distinctive expressions in order to explain, where possible, why such features have been used as opposed to other alternatives and to classify these features into categories based upon a view of their functions in the social context (10). They believe that stylistics is used in analyzing language conventions as used in different communicative contexts. They further opine that it does not only identify linguistic features but goes further to explain the functions of such features and why they are preferred vis-à-vis other alternatives.

'Distinctive expressions' (as stated above) simply implies that certain expressions draw the attention of the audience/reader (perhaps by going against the convention or by numerous repetitions). Certainly, there must be reason(s) for such unusual expressions and this prompts an investigation into why such distinctive expressions are used. It is the collection of such expressions that are technically referred to as foregrounding.

### **Foregrounding in Stylistics**

The term 'foregrounding' refers to an effect brought about in the reader by linguistic or other forms of deviation in a text. The deviant features of the text, being unexpected, come to the foreground of reader's attention against the background of its normal linguistic features. It serves as an attention-calling device in a literary text through the exploitation of a range of linguistic devices like repetition, coupling, unexpected lexical collocations, syntactic inversions and so on. Leech and Short (48) identify two kinds of foregrounding: qualitative foregrounding and quantitative foregrounding. In the former, there is deviation

from the rules of the language code or from the conventions of language use or both. In the latter, the deviance is from some expected frequency of linguistic occurrence and not from the language code. When a writer writes, he or she is constantly involved in making linguistic choices. The choices he or she makes both outside and inside the language system may thus lead to foregrounding. In the words of Simpson,

... foregrounding typically involves a stylistic distortion of some sort, either through an aspect of the text which deviates from a linguistic norm or, alternatively, where an aspect of the text is brought to the fore through repetition or parallelism. That means that foregrounding comes in two main guises: foregrounding as 'deviation from a norm' and foregrounding as 'more of the same'. Foregrounding is essentially a technique for 'making strange' in language... a method of 'defamiliarisation' in textual composition (50).

Qualitative foregrounding (also deviation) may be realized at phonological/graphological level (such as elision, epenthesis, for phonology, and italicisation, capitalisation, spacing and ordering, paragraphing, and so on for graphology), at the level of grammar/lexicon (through a subject-verb inversion, thematic fronting, unusual grammaticality, deliberate wrong spelling, unusual coinages and so on) and at the level of meaning (such as unusual collocation, ambiguity, vagueness and so on). As for quantitative foregrounding, there is simply more than usual repetitions of an item. For instance, rhetorical questions litter almost every page of Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* and this is to achieve a particular stylistic effect.

### Public Speeches: A Review

Public speeches are formal presentations made to an audience on important subjects. These subjects may be politically, socially or religiously oriented. Political speeches, however, seem to be the most popular type of public speeches. According to Aristotle, cited in Sheleva (1),

... the main goal of public speech (sic) is to get the corresponding result through persuasion. Through persuasion a politician wishes: to get the addressee to vote for a certain candidate; to gain people's love and to strengthen his image; to make people share his opinion and to agree with his words; to inform the general public of his viewpoint on a certain question.

Sheleva goes forward to highlight various ways in which this persuasion may be achieved linguistically. These include non-fact verbs, the verbs of mental activity, the verbs of estimation, the performative verbs expressing promise, declaring; different types of questions, both direct and indirect, reduced and full; cleft sentences, sayings and proverbs, Bible quotations, formulae of participation, syntactic parallelism (anaphora, anadiplosis), inversion, phraseological units, emphatic *do* and *did*, reiteration, metaphors, historical



comparisons, antithesis, violent expressions which make the speech abrupt (categorical, raising no objections), and many others.

Zheng, while analysing Martin Luther King's (Jnr) famous speech, *I Have a Dream*, reveals that the speech is enlivened with many stylistic devices ranging from common and literary words, pronouns, repetition and parallelism, periodic sentence structure to euphemism, simile, metaphor, pun, paradox, irony, antithesis, rhythm, and alliteration among others. In the same vein, Diep focuses on the linguistic features of Barak Obama's speeches with special emphasis on the communicative functions of repetition, metaphor and euphemism. His findings show that Obama often uses stylistic devices such as metaphor, repetition, euphemism, and so on to increase the listener's attention and attraction of a speech and to arouse listeners' interest of their ideas or policies. Fang Liu considers the American inaugural speech as a genre having found out that certain linguistic and ideological features run through the studied thirty-five inaugural speeches from the time of George Washington to the time of Barak Obama.

### **Stylistic Peculiarities of Goodluck Jonathan's & Barak Obama's Inaugural Speeches**

On the general plane, Jonathan's speech dwells on three aspects: compliments or salutations, pre-inaugural issues and the prospects of the new administration. The first aspect, salutation, is brief but there is a prolonged emphasis on the pre-inaugural issues like pre- and post-electoral matters, and more on the prospects of the new administration. Obama's speech, on the other hand, can simply be divulged into two aspects: salutation and the prospects of the new administration. While the former is kept brief, the latter is lingered upon. The specific stylistic features of the speeches are examined below.

#### **Graphological Features**

At the graphological level of the inaugural speech of Goodluck Jonathan, we cannot but first notice the itemisation of the paragraphs. There are forty-one paragraphs and so, they are numbered one through forty-one. These paragraphs do not match one another in size, and this results in some one-sentence paragraphs. The itemisation of the paragraphs demeans or devalues the importance of paragraph connectors such as *more so*, *furthermore*, *also* and so on. Where they appear, they only serve as sentence connectors. This, in essence, makes an individual paragraph 'independent' or self-reliant.

However, Obama's paragraphs are not really graphologically noteworthy. The only graphologically distinctive expressions in his speech are the lexical items *Life*, *Liberty* and *Happiness*, which have been given the status of proper nouns. The effect of this is that those words or ideas reflect some of the basic or 'inalienable' rights of the Americans.

#### **Lexico-semantic Features**

In Jonathan's speech, there is the preponderance of personal pronouns: first and second persons, which seems to reflect the philosophy of *we and others*. On the whole, there are 157 first person pronouns: 61 singular and 87 plural. Of the 61 singular pronouns, 39 are in the subjective case, 7 in objective case and 15 in possessive case. Of the plural pronouns, 38 are subjectively used, 9 objectively used and 49 possessively used. As expected, the

second person pronouns are less used. They appear only in 33 occasions: 5 subjective, 12 objective and 16 possessive. The distribution of the first and second personal pronouns as used in the speech is presented below.

**Table 1.1** *Distribution of the First and Second Person Pronouns in President Jonathan's Inaugural Speech*

| Items                  | Subjective | Objective | Possessive | Total | Percentage |
|------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|-------|------------|
| First Person Singular  | 39         | 07        | 15         | 61    | 32.1       |
| First Person Plural    | 38         | 09        | 49         | 96    | 50.5       |
| Second Person Singular | -          | -         | -          | -     |            |
| Second Person Plural   | 05         | 12        | 16         | 33    | 17.4       |
| Total                  | 82         | 28        | 80         | 190   | 100        |

The statistic above reveals how leadership is viewed by Nigerian leaders: there is a gap between the leadership and followership. Leadership is not viewed from the perspective of the masses. This is further buttressed by such utterances like *I represent...*, *my administration...*, *those of us that you have elected...*, *I am confident ...* and so on. In fact, at some point in the course of the speech, President Jonathan precariously recognises this fact, and, therefore, calls for a synergy of the two (The leadership and the followership must strive to convert our vast human and natural resources ...)

It is also important to comment on the choice of words of Nigerian President Jonathan. Certain lexical items used in his speech reveal the ethnic diversity and the inherent disunity among the various ethnic groups. For instance, expressions such as *peoples*, *North*, *South*, *East*, *West*, *differences*, *creed*, *tongue*, *minority ethnic group* and so on buttress this. They show the Nigerians, de facto, still see one another from the perspective of ethnicity, region or religion. Even President Jonathan attests to this fact in his speech while he warns that Nigerians should 'not allow anyone exploit differences in creed or tongue' to set them against one another.

Furthermore, there are lexical items that mark a disconnection of Jonathan's administration from the earlier regimes. Such lexical items tend to suggest the birth of a new regime. Consider the following expressions:

- Our decade of development has begun
- The march is on
- The day of transformation begins today
- We are ready to take off on the path of sustained growth and economic development
- Join me now as we begin the journey of transforming Nigeria
- See a new beginning; a new direction; a new spirit.

Each of these expressions individually demarcates or separates the older regimes from the present one. It also indicates the new regime is pregnant with an avalanche of hopes, and it is devoid of disillusionment that characterised the previous administrations.

Apart from this, certain lexical items are outstanding. For instance, there is collocational deviation in *humble gratitude*. The adjective *humble* is semantically [+Human] but here it has been collocated with [-Human] having a metaphorical effect. There is also an antithetical effect in the construction *Tragically, overwhelmed by the joy of our victory*. And finally, unpleasant news is stylistically euphemized through a careful lexical choice: *He collapsed, and passed on three days later*.

In the text of the US President Barak Obama, our attention is first drawn to the aesthetic use of the plural first person pronouns *we* and *us* which litter the inaugural speech. Unlike in the Jonathan's speech, these pronouns do not preclude others (followership) but rather include them. This explains why intermittently the pronouns are followed by an appositive, for instance, **we, the people**. The quantum of the singular pronoun, *I* or *me* or *my*, is quite insignificant. In fact, it is almost non-existent except in a paragraph towards the end of the speech which Obama refers to an action he personally undertook:

My fellow Americans, the oath I have sworn before you today ... But the words I spoke today... My oath is not so different...

The stylistic implication of the use of the first person plural is two-fold. One is that, despite differences in the race, background and colour, Americans see themselves or, at least, project themselves as united or undivided. The second is that leadership in America is seen as collective. Every American has a role to play in nation building. The so-called leaders are mere people's representatives and so must pursue their interest. Let us examine the expressions below:

- Together, we determined that a modern economy requires railroads and highways to speed travel and commerce; schools and colleges to train our workers.
- Together, we discovered that a free market only thrives when there are rules to ensure competition and fair play.
- Together, we resolved that a great nation must care for the vulnerable, and protect its people from life's worst hazards and misfortune.

The continuous repetition of the word, *together*, is simply to arouse sense of belonging in the Americans. Other lexico-semantic feature of Obama's speech is personification. There are also personified expressions like '*... crises that steeled our resolve and paved our resilience*', '*our purpose endures...*' and so on.

### Syntactic Features

In the Jonathan's speech, there is an avalanche of noun phrases (henceforth NP) which are either pre-modified or post-modified. Notable among the pre-modifiers is the attributive

adjective which seems to be very strong, stable or permanent. That is, attributive adjectives define, restrict or delimit the reference of the noun more closely and thus form a more unitary relationship with it. The post-modifiers are mostly in form of prepositional phrases (henceforth PP). Consider the following expressions.

- a. At the polls, we saw the *most dramatic* expressions of the *hunger for democracy*.
- b. Stories of *courage and patriotism* were repeated ... physically *challenged* voters ...
- c. ... a citizen from a minority group could galvanize *national* support, on an *unprecedented* scale, to discard *ancient* prejudices...
- d. It is the *supreme* task of *this generation* to ...
- e. The transformation will be achieved in all the *critical* sectors, by harnessing the *creative energies of our people*.

In (i), there is the need to be unequivocal about the kind of expressions meant. There may be some misunderstanding if only the PP post-modifies the head of the NP, for it may mean 'an expression with words'. However, pre-modifying the head by a predicative adjective 'most dramatic' clears the semantic problem that may arise. In (ii), the PP (of courage and patriotism) limits the sense of the noun 'stories' while the adjective 'challenged' reveals a permanent attribute of the noun 'voters'. In (iii), the heads of the NP are attributively modified so that 'national', 'unprecedented' and 'ancient' describe 'support', 'scale' and 'prejudices' respectively. In (iv), there are modifiers (supreme) and qualifiers (of this generation) jointly identifying the noun 'task' while in (v), the noun 'sector' is modified by 'critical' and the noun 'energies' is both modified and qualified by 'creative' and 'of our people' respectively.

These modifiers and qualifiers stylistically serve the purpose of enhancing, identifying, restricting or disambiguating the head of the NP. They make the content of the message unequivocal. Without some of the modifiers and qualifiers, the NP may be broad (and confusing) or rather weak. For instance, in the eighth paragraph of the speech, we can appreciate the functions of the modifier and qualifier better in the final sentence: The *pivotal* task of *this generation* is to lift our fatherland to the summit of *greatness*. In fact, 'summit of greatness' is stylistically distinctive.

It is also imperative to examine the use of adverbials in Jonathan's speech. There are numerous initial adverbials resulting in thematic fronting of stylistic repute. Once a unit of clause is taken to the initial position, emphasis tends to lie there rather than the other units (this is called marked theme). Examine the following utterances:

- *At the polls*, we saw...
- *Today*, our unity is firm ...
- *A decade ago*, it would have...
- *Only a couple of days ago*, I receive ...

In the text of Obama, majority of the NPs have similar structures with the NPs in Jonathan's speech – Pre-modifier, Head, Post-modifier. These modifiers have similar functions. Examples of such include

- *This generation of Americans*
- *A decade of war*
- *An economic recovery*

Just as we identified in Jonathan's speech, there are also so many fronted adverbials in Obama's speech. Examples of such include

- *Today we continue...*
- *Each time we gather...*
- *Though blood drawn by lash and blood drawn by sword, we learned...*

One syntactic feature found in Obama's speech but absent in Jonathan's speech is a parallel structure. Parallel clauses or structures place ideas or information in a uniform manner. Examples of such in Obama's text are

- *For our journey is not complete until ...*
- *Our journey is not complete until our gay brothers...*
- *Our journey is not complete until no citizen ...*

### Phonological Features

Jonathan's speech reflects many situations of alliteration such as *founding fathers*, *foundation for* the nation, *were repeated in many ways*, *fellow citizens helped physically...* There are also some rhymes in his speech, for instance *we fought for decolonization*, *we will now fight for democratization*.

In Obama's speech, we can also find instances of alliteration such as *no more meet*, *muskets and militias*.

### Findings

This paper has revealed that Jonathan and Obama's speeches share similar phonological features in terms of alliteration; and same syntactic features in terms of fronting of the adverbials, NPs structure but not in terms of parallel structures. At the level of graphology, Jonathan's paragraphs are completely deviant and devoid of paragraph connectors while Obama's speech is not outstanding in this respect. The two speeches also have different lexico-semantic features: while Jonathan's speech is built on metaphor, antithesis and euphemism, Obama's is built on personification.

### Conclusion

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that public speeches often contain unusual syntactic features such as thematic fronting, complex NPs, and parallelism. There may also



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be lexical items with unusual semantic features resulting from antithesis, metaphorical expressions, and collocational 'awkwardness'. And finally, there may also be phonological features like rhymes and alliteration. These combine together to situate public speeches in the right perspective such that the contents of the speeches are matched with the appropriate styles.

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## **28. A Lexico-Semantic Analysis of the Language of *The Forest of God* Translated by Gabriel A. Ajadi**

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Lexico-semantics, a hybrid of lexis and semantics, is the theory of language that examines how meanings of lexemes, terms and expressions are realized based on a given situation. In this study, the authors consider the language of Gabriel A. Ajadi's *The Forest of God* with the aim of investigating lexico-semantic features of Nigerian English that the writer employs in developing the narrative. Content analysis of the novel serves as the primary research method, while Adegbija's (1989) and Jowitt's (1991) lexico-semantic features of Nigerianisms are utilized for analyzing the data. Findings reveal that transfer, semantic shift, loan words and proverbs are predominant in the text. These features, among others, establish the text as an African writing, entrenches the socio-cultural realities in Yoruba milieu and foregrounds meaning realization in the mind of the native Yoruba language user.

**Key words:** *lexico-semantics, Nigerian English, The Forest of God*

### **0. Introduction**

It is an established fact that writers are influenced by the realities of their socio-cultural milieu and reflect same in their works (Babatunde 1997:174). Such reflections are captured and disseminated via language. Language, therefore, is an indispensable tool in the hand of a writer and remains the major way through which a writer's literary ingenuity, creativity and prowess are revealed: it is the window to access the thought pattern of a writer. The worth of a literary piece is not determined merely by its content but by the way the content has been presented; hence a writer's language use does not only reveal his work(s) but the person behind the work(s) and the socio-cultural context in which he operates. Consequently, the need to examine the language of a literary work cannot be over-emphasized as its mining can yield enormous inter-textual information.

*Igbo Olodumare* is originally written in Yoruba language by D.O. Fagunwa, a renowned literary artist in Western Nigeria. His literary dexterity is entrenched via his five major novels, all presented in his mother tongue – Yoruba. For wider readership, Gabriel A. Ajadi translated *Igbo Olodumare* (1949) into English as *The Forest of God* (1995) just as Wole Soyinka did with *Ogboju Ode ninu Igbo Irunmole* (1938) into *The Forest of a Thousand Daemons: A Hunter's Saga* (1968). In translating *Igbo Olodumare* into *The Forest of God*, Ajadi (1995:1) reveals that "the translator's stylistic idiosyncrasy is

sacrificed in order to unveil the author's meaning in his own words and style". According to him (Ajadi), the semantico-communicative translation method he utilizes "necessitates a literal translation which keeps the sense of words and expressions within the cultural perspective of the original language without blurring the intelligibility of the content in English... but maintains the interest of the English reader as well" (21-22). Ajadi submits that the style of the original writer informs his translation. This admission of self-styling necessitates a study of styles and styling.

Various explanations have been given on the concept of style but only few that are in consonance with our present study will be mentioned here. Beardsley (1958) views style from a semantic perspective and defines it as the result of the writer's choice between synonymous expressions. To Askeberg (2000), "style is the way in which, in a particular situation, you succeed to give your words an intended effect." The implication of Askeberg's submission is that style is situation-bound. His stance, therefore, concurs with 'style as situation' – an approach to the study of style. Lawal (1997:27) conceives style as the appropriate usage of language.

Our concern in this paper is to carry out a lexico-semantic analysis of the text by pointing out its dominant lexical features.

### **1. Research Procedure**

The primary research approach in this paper is content analysis of the text. The quantitative and the qualitative analysis of language use as informed by the lexico-semantics of Nigerian English by the author of *The Forest of God* is the basis of our analysis. The words and expressions selected for discussion are done on the basis of identified characteristics and styles of Nigerian English usage.

### **2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

Since the time English language left its native soil and got implanted in Nigeria as a second language, the Nigerian users have been manipulating it to reflect their socio-cultural values and world views which are different from what is obtainable in the English socio-cultural milieu. Odebunmi (2006:106) has noted rightly in establishing that "... certain socio-cultural variables influence the variety of English we speak. Since realities and experiences peculiar to our communities are expressed in another language, certain differences from the Standard English are expected to occur." The advent, nurture and entrenchment of English in Nigerian environment, the interaction of same with Nigerian indigenous languages and the way it is being used to express Nigerian socio-cultural world views in all ramifications have given rise to a variety of English that is now referred to as Nigerian English. Explicating the ways English language has been nativized in Nigeria, Bamgbose (1995:20-22) identifies three aspects of nativization namely linguistics, pragmatics and creativity. Hence, that Nigerian English has evolved is an established fact in literature (Brosnanhan 1958, Bamgbose 1982, Adegbiya 1989, Bamiro 1991, Jowitt 1991, Akindele and Adegbite 1999, Odebunmi 2006).

The term (or language theory) "lexico-semantics" is a fusion of two concepts – lexis and semantics and, in a nutshell, implies how words account for meanings in a given

situation (see Bemigho and Olateju 2007). It is observed that lexis and semantics work together in the linguistic description in a work of art (Olaosun 2005:94 as cited in Osisanwo 2012: 124).

Adegbija (1989:165-177) identifies five classes of lexico-semantic variation in Nigerian English. They are: transfer, analogy, acronyms, semantic shift or extension, and coinages or neologisms.

#### *Transfer*

According to him, transfer is a way of literally translating a meaning (in mother tongue), transferring culture, context and features of Nigerian pidgin (all of) which are alien to English into English as a result of English equivalent (s) (if there is/are) unable to capture adequately the denotative and connotative signification of the lexeme, concept or idea. Examples of such are bush – meat (game), hear a smell (perceive an odour), branch (stop over).

#### *Analogy*

In the same vein, “analogy or generalization describes the formation of new words on the basis of partial likeness or agreement in form or in sense with already existing words, either in mother tongue or in English” (Adegbija 1989:172). Examples of analogy in Nigerian English include the following: Zikism (ideology of Azikiwe), informations, equipments, sufferness, invitee, broadcasted (for information, equipment, suffering, guest and broadcast respectively).

#### *Acronyms*

Acronyms refer to lexical items formed from initial letters or some parts of existing words. Instances of acronyms in Nigerian English are ASUU (Academic Staff Union of (Nigerian) Universities), JAMB (Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board), and NUJ (Nigerian Union of Journalists).

#### *Semantic Shift or Extension*

Semantic shift or extension implies a situation when the meaning of lexemes is narrowed, broadened or completely shifted. Note the following instances: machine, globe, escort (for a motorcycle, a bulb, to see a guest off respectively).

#### *Coinages or Neologisms*

The need for describing new experiences, feelings, thought patterns, mode of life, culture and customs has necessitated creating or inventing new words. Few examples of coinages are: yellow- fever, sobo, bean cake.

#### *Loan words or Borrowing*

Another lexico-semantic feature of Nigerian English is that it (NE) has accommodated lexical items from Nigerian indigenous languages and few other languages (like Arabic



and French) that Nigerian English users have interacted with. Jowitt (1991 Rpt. 2000: 133) affirms the foregoing features and, corroborating on borrowing, adds that

An MT (mother tongue) word counts as a loan-word in NE (Nigerian English) provided that it satisfies the following conditions:

- 1a) It has no exact English equivalent, or b) it is used in preference to the English equivalent if such an equivalent exists (often because the English equivalent is a longer paraphrase).
- 2) It occurs regularly and systematically in the English speech of Nigerian users.

Instances of loan-words in Nigerian English are Agbada (from Yoruba), Tuwo (from Hausa), Ogbono (from Igbo), Oba (from Yoruba/Edo).

### **Collocations, Clichés and Proverbs**

A combination of collocations, clichés and proverbs is yet another feature that characterizes Nigerian English lexis (Jowitt: *ibid*). Jowitt exemplifies with the following among others:

#### *Clichés*

aid and abet  
the body politic  
bad eggs of the society  
bouncing baby boy

#### *Proverbs*

There is no smoke without fire.  
A word is enough for the wise.  
The downfall of a man is not the end of his life.  
When two elephants fight, the grass suffers.

Lexico-semantics, as a language theory, has been used to analyze both literary and non-literary texts (see Odebunmi 1996; Babatunde 1997; Osisanwo 2012; Teilanyo 2012). However, the theoretical framework employed for analysis in this paper is within the purview of Adegbija (1989) and Jowitt (1991).

### **3. Lexico-semantic Features in *The Forest of God***

In *The Forest of God*, Ajadi presents a fiction of a powerful hunter, Olowo-aiye, who heads for the dreaded and vicious Igbo Olodumare to hunt. He (Olowo-aiye) fights gnomes (Esu-kekere-ode and Anjonnu-iberu of the Jungle of Silence and Igbo Olodumare respectively), gets married to his wife, Ajediran, gets lost, acquires more wisdom, knowledge, power and wealth (all these in Igbo Olodumare) and returns home victorious.

A careful reading of *The Forest of God* reveals that transfer, semantic shift, loan words, coinages and proverbs are the lexico-semantic features of Nigerianisms Ajadi employs in translating the text in order to preserve the style of the original author. These features, as gleaned from the text, are presented below.

**Table 1:** Analysis of Lexico-semantic Features in The Forest of God

| Types of Lexico-semantic Pattern | No of items | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Transfer                         | 94          | 49.74%     |
| Semantic Shift                   | 21          | 11.11%     |
| Loan Words                       | 29          | 15.34%     |
| Coinages or Neologisms           | 5           | 2.65%      |
| Proverbs                         | 40          | 21.16%     |
| Total                            | 189         | 100%       |

*Transfer*

From the table above, the total number of items of lexico-semantic features that are identified is one hundred and eighty-nine. Ninety-four items of this number are instances of transfer of mother tongue features into English, which is 49.74 percent of the total items. Examples are given below (labelled mother tongue English –MTE) with their Standard English equivalent (labelled SEE) in each context:

MTE: A man who wakes up early in the morning of his life... (p. 33)

SEE: A man who wakes up early in life...

MTE: ... before my mother entered the house of her husband... (p. 31)

SEE: ... before my mother got married...

MTE: ... if you slap my ears... (p. 52)

SEE: ... if you slap me...

MTE: My wife accompanied me to the road (to the forest)... (p. 67)

SEE: My wife saw me off to the way (to the forest)...

MTE: ... and his head over-turned ... (p. 90)

SEE: ... and he became insane...

*Transfer of idioms*

MTE: ... there are bones in man's body... (p. 32)

SEE: ... I am ever strong...

MTE: Before a bird picked a guinea-corn... (p. 100)

SEE: Immediately...

MTE: ... I shall not take my sacrifice beyond the crossroads... (p. 83)

SEE: ... I shall not go beyond limits ...

The preponderance of transfer is not without some significance. The sense of some words, terms and expressions identified under transfer do not exist in their perfect forms in Standard English. For example, “there are bones in man's body” may be tautological in English sense because all humans have bones as part of their physiology but to a Yoruba person, it signifies that the person being spoken of is very strong, full of agility and can do exploits via his power.

Besides, transfer is used, among others, to entrench the socio-cultural realities in Yoruba/Nigerian milieus. For example, when the narrator says “A man who wakes up early in the morning of his life, and gives important place in his heart to a woman’s matter will not become important forever” (p.33), much is meant than is said. The signification of “the morning of life” is weightier than the English equivalent “early in life.” Yorubas/Nigerians opine that life has three phases or stages viz. morning, afternoon and night. They attach much value to the activities and the engagement of “the morning of life” because what happens to an individual afterward is dependent on how he/she spends the morning time. It is the first phase of life which should be invested in worthwhile ideals like learning a trade or craft or building a good career and acquisition of good moral values in order to have an enviable future or destiny. Hence, such a time should be meaningfully invested in lasting “profit-oriented ventures.” As such, misplacement of priorities at this phase of life is frowned at. Pursuing love before having what it takes to sustain it is a misplacement of priority, and all may not end well with such a person is implied in this expression. The import of the expression, in a nutshell, is putting the cart before the horse.

In Yoruba tradition, it is believed that ancestral spirits and other spirits haunt crossroads in midnights hence sacrifices are placed there so that once such sacrifices are consumed by those spirits, the rationale for the sacrifices are granted. However, if a sacrifice is not placed at a crossroad but at any other place, the spirits who see such may be enraged and cause a greater calamity to befall the one who places the sacrifice. Crossroads, therefore, serve as the confines for acceptable sacrifices. Hence, anyone who takes his sacrifice beyond the crossroad is inviting the wrath of the invisible spirits for going beyond limits. We doubt if this sense is obtainable in English thus.

### *Semantic shift*

Twenty-one items indicate the use of semantic shift (about 11.11%) in the table presented above. Instances of such cases in the text are:

MTE: ... and *peaceful* air was blowing... (p. 29)

SEE: ... and fresh air was blowing...

MTE: ... I shall take care of your *path* ... (p. 35)

SEE: ... I shall take care of your all in all (everything)...

MTE: A *chain* made of gold ... (p. 59)

SEE: A necklace made of gold ...

MTE: ... He knows *day after tomorrow*... (p. 102)

SEE: ... He knows the future ...

MTE: ... she was an *old* witch. (p.117)

SEE: ... she was a powerful witch.

The use of semantic shift in the text affords the reader to know what goes on in the mind of a native user of Yoruba language in terms of meaning realization in certain contexts in comparison with English. For instance, when the narrator says: “and *peaceful* air was blowing...” (p. 29), in that context, the air blowing was not only ‘fresh’ but it was calm

and comforting which culminated in peace. Also, the word ‘old’ does not only depict age in certain contexts in Yoruba but it implies ‘experienced, powerful, strong.’ Hence, in “... she was an *old* witch” (p.117), the age of the character is not the reference but the power she possessed.

#### *Loan words*

There are twenty-nine cases of identified loan words in the text which amount to 15.34 percent of lexico-semantic Nigerianisms in the novel. All the loan words in the novel are from Yoruba language, the mother tongue of Fagunwa and Ajadi (apart from ‘alhaji’ and ‘imam’ which are from Arabic). The lexemes are related to food (as in ‘eko, moinmoin, awusa, garri, oka, efo, akasu’), music (like ‘bolo, agidigbo, sekere, bata’), religion (such as ‘ifa, Osanyin, sari, Anabi’) and clothing (as in ‘dandogo, sanyan, buba). Other miscellaneous Yoruba lexemes include ‘aluko, akalamagbo, ado, arun (disease), akeji, oriki, itadogun, pele.

The retention of these Yoruba lexical items in the translation is significant: some of them do not exist in the English culture in their perfect forms (for example, ‘pele’, ‘itadogun’, ‘ifa’, ‘Osanyin’ and all the words mentioned above under food, music and clothing). Most importantly, those lexical items are retained partly to establish that Yoruba culture is rich and to add to the vocabulary of the English language. ‘Moinmoin’ and ‘garri’, for instance, have been recognized in Nigerian English lexicon. Through those lexemes, Ajadi ‘sells’ Yoruba language freely to the world.

#### *Coinages or Neologisms*

The instances of coinages or neologisms are only five (that is 2.65 percent); they are all recognized in Nigerian English. They are presented below with their Standard English paraphrases (or equivalent in case of head-tie).

Palm-wine: wine tapped from palm trees

Bean-cake: a kind of cake made from beans

Head-tie: scarf

Flowing-gown: a kind of loose gown worn in Nigeria

Yam-flour: a type of flour made from yam

#### *Proverbs and Adages*

A combination of transliterated proverbs and adages (from Yoruba) is yet another language feature Ajadi uses to enhance the aesthetics of the text. In themselves, proverbs and adages have far-reaching meanings, hence Ajadi uses them to drive home his message, strengthen didacticism, sermonette and satire. Furthermore, they provide local colour and reiterate the text as a native and African narrative. They also universalize the incidents (where they are used) and reduce the harshness of the utterances (Akindele and Adegbite, 1999:48). Forty instances indicate the use of proverbs in the novel, which is 21.16 percent of the total features of lexico-semantic Nigerianisms. Examples of proverbs in the text are given thus with their Standard English Meanings (SEM).

Proverb: When a big affliction dashes one to the ground, smaller ones grab the opportunity to climb on that one (p. 52).

SEM: “When one is depressed by a terrible affliction, lesser troubles find their ways into one’s mind, thereby perpetuating one’s affliction and downward slide” (Ajadi:152).

Proverb: ... a partridge that compares itself with a hen is playing with death... (p. 104)

SEM: comparing oneself with others is disastrous or risky.

Proverb: ... all days belong to the thief; the owner has but one day (p. 122).

SEM: Nemesis catches up with the wicked.

Proverb: people look at another fellow’s back of the head; they never look at their own back of the head (p. 126).

SEM: people are keen on seeing the faults of others better (rather) than theirs.

Proverb: A dog never forgets its benefactor ... (p. 143)

SEM: Gratitude is a good virtue.

The use of proverbs and adages ranks second in the analysis above. This is significant in that it establishes the text as an African writing for Osundare (2003:30) has rightly observed that one major characteristic that distinguishes African writing from all other world writings is proverbial language. Proverbs and adages, among others, enhance the gravity of what is said for there is hardly any situation that does not have a relevant proverb to support it. For example, when the protagonist says: “A dog never forgets its benefactor; I cannot forget you forever...” (p.143), he means more than what is said. The implication is that if a dog, an animal, without common sense, can be grateful to its benefactor by running to meet him and wagging its tail in appreciation, he, a human being with all senses functioning, can never forget his benefactor for all that the latter has done for him. What a far-reaching and thought-provoking statement! This proverb reiterates that gratitude is a good virtue for all humans to imbibe and exhibit.

The adage “too much talk breeds a lie” warns against loquacity which can make the speaker tell lies unaware. It is a universal appeal for moderation and precision when communicating.

From the data above, it is evident that there is preponderance of transfer, proverbs and loan words. The use of these features is not without some significance: it is to foreground and entrench the original thought patterns of the writer and to establish it as an African literary work. They also reflect the language and the culture of Yoruba people.

From the afore-going, it is evident that Ajadi’s translation of the work is mainly to preserve the culture of the original writer and to afford foreign readers access to the socio-



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cultural realities of Yoruba. But for annotations that accompany the translation, some expressions would have impeded international intelligibility.

#### **4. Conclusion**

That Nigerian English has come to stay is not a doubt or a subject of debate: it does not limit itself to inter-personal discourse but flexes its muscles in Nigerian literary works as well. This study reveals that Ajadi explores lexico-semantic features of Nigerian English in *The Forest of God* and that there is preponderance of transfer, proverbs, loan words and semantic shift in the novel so as to preserve the style, thought pattern, language and the culture of the original writer. The use of transfer is employed to entrench the socio-cultural realities in the milieus of the writer. Semantic shift features to reflect how meaning is realized in the mind of the native Yoruba users. Through loan words, Ajadi is able to portray rich Yoruba culture and “sell” Yoruba language to the reader. Proverbs and adages establish the narrative as an African writing and also enhance the gravity of expressions and drive home the issues being considered.

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## **29. An Analysis of Linguistic System and Linguistic Context: A Systemic Functional Linguistic Perspective**

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This paper explores the structure and function of human language from systemic functional linguistic perspective. The paper discusses the nature of human linguistic system and the role of context in the various aspects of linguistic function. From another perspective, the paper highlights the relationship holding between *context* and *text*. According to Halliday, the relationship between text (which is an embodiment of linguistic system) and context (which is a semiotic construct) is that of instantiation. In other words, any piece of text spoken or written will always carry an indication of its context. Similarly, given a context, one can easily predict the kind of text that is likely to be generated from that context.

### **Introduction**

Systemic Functional Linguistics grew out of the work of J.R. Firth, but it was through his student, M.A.K. Halliday, that it was extensively developed and refined to its present form. Halliday's contributions in this respect have generally been hailed as "the most important development of the ideas within the so-called 'London School' of linguistics" (Butler 1985: 1). The word system has been variously used in connection to language. For example language is a system of communication, 'language is a social system of symbolization, and language is a system of arbitrary sounds used for human communication etc. What then is a system within the context of linguistics? The answer to this question was offered long ago by De Saussure.

De Saussure (1916) clearly distinguishes between 'langue' and 'Parole'. Langue is the understanding system that speakers use to produce and understand speech. Parole refers to the actual utterances produced by a speaker. From this distinction between Langue and Parole, it could be asserted that language only exists as a shared social phenomenon.

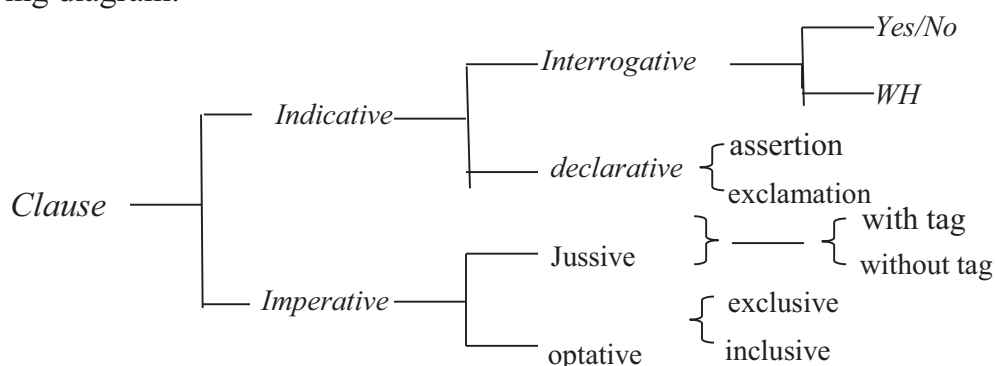
Ferdinand de Saussure (Ibid) asserts that the signs in the language system are related to each other in two different ways: paradigmatic and syntagmatic. By paradigmatic, De Saussure refers to the similarities and contrast between linguistic signs which allow for formal choices. Syntagmatic relationship refers to the grammatical rules that combine the elements in larger structures of phrases, clauses, and sentences.

Asiyanbola (2012: 45) shares the notion that a system is a category of grammar that accounts for the occurrence of one rather than another from a number of the like events and that a system is a set of features, only one of which must be selected to satisfy the entry condition. He further explains that the characteristics of the member of a system are that they are reciprocally defining, reciprocally exclusive and finite.

**Language as a System** In systemic functional linguistics, language is conceived as a system that we use as speakers and writers to create meaning. According to Nesbitt (2004:2) systemic functional linguistics adopts a tristratal division of a linguistic system namely: phonology, lexico-grammar and semantics. A linguistic system in this sense consists of **semantics** which is a resource for making meaning. **Lexico-grammar** is the resource for turning those meaning into wordings and **phonology**, a resource for turning those wordings into soundings.

#### Linguistic System

A linguistic system is in form of paradigmatic opposition or alternatives. A linguistic system consists of an entry condition and at least two options. For example Butler (1985:46) presents the clause system of English in the following diagram:



*A simplified system network for the clause in English*

A system, then, is a set of features which stand in contrast with each other in a specified environment of which one will be chosen whenever the environmental conditions obtain. Viewed as process, it is the name of the choice to be made. For example, the system of polarity, which can be thought of as the prototype of all grammatical systems, is the set of features “positive/negative”; it is the name of the choice between the two. The environment of the choice is known as the “entry condition” of the system. It might be “major clause”; that is, if the entry condition is a major clause, then we can select either positive or negative, in other words, every major clause is either positive or negative.

#### Text as a Product of System

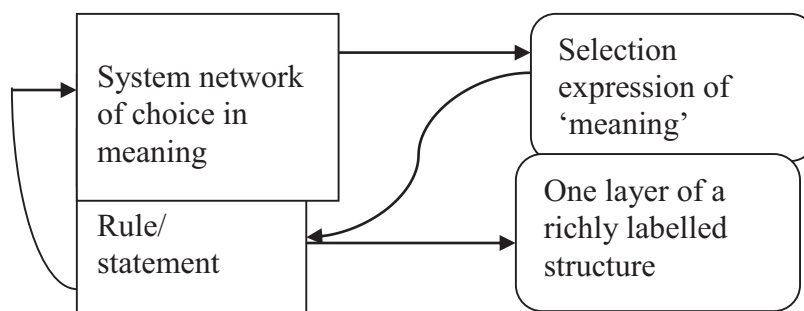
Text is the manifestation of linguistic system in a situation of use. It is an instance of use which de Saussure (1916) refers to as ‘Parole’ that is language in use. Text, according to Nesbitt (2004), is the system potential in actual situation of use. He asserts that the relationship between text and system from the point of view of systemic functional linguistics is seen as one of instantiation. From this view point, it could be asserted that a particular kind of text is a particular instantiation of a linguistic system. Text is the representation of choice as demonstrated in the following diagram.



From the diagram one can see that a text is a representation of the meaning potential inherent in language. It is important to note that a text can be spoken or written long or short. It can be a single utterance, a narration, an advert, or a caption on a newspaper. A text must be a product of a careful and meaningful choice in a linguistic system and the choice must be situationally relevant by means of cohesion and coherence.

According to Halliday and Mathiessen (1997) the relationship of system to text, known as instantiation, is not as simple as it first appears; in fact, it is highly problematic. System and text are not two different things entirely; they are the same thing seen from different perspectives, different standpoints of the observer. A helpful analogy may be that of "climate" and "weather": there is only one set of phenomena here, not two, but we call it weather when we experience it instantially, as meteorological "text", and climate when we are taking a long-term perspective in order to establish and explain the principle of the meteorological "system" that lies behind it. A text is meaningful only because it is the instantiation of a systemic potential: this is what is meant by saying that speaker and listener must share a "command of the language", an unconscious awareness of the interstratal patterns (how forms of wording realize meaning and are realized in sounds) and of the topology of each stratum (how what is said contrasts with what might have been said but was not). By the same token, our concept of system is valid only because it is instantiated in text: each instance keeps alive the potential, on the one hand reinforcing it and on the other hand challenging and changing it. This dialectic of text and system is what we understand by a living language.

Similarly, Fawcett (2000:36) describes the relationship between 'the potential' and an 'instance' of that 'potential' as one of instantiation. The two concepts are used to define four components that are essential for modeling a semiotic system. The two concepts provide a framework for thinking about language in terms of (1) potential (2) instance (3) meaning and (4) form. The four components of this model can be represented diagrammatically.



*Adapted from Fawcett (2000: 36)*



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Fawcett (ibid) also posits that:

It is the task a theory of SF syntax to specify both the apparatus that generates the text-sentences that are the output from the grammar (the realization component) and the concept that are required to model those outputs...in other words, it is not enough to model language in its generative mode... the theory must supply the concepts that are required for modeling the use of language in both **generation** and the **analysis** of text-sentence and it must do this for each level of language that is recognized in the theory.

Hasan and Perrett (1994: 21) assert that in the layer of transitivity system a clause is being analyzed for its potential to represent both the outer and the inner world of human beings, this exactly is what the ideational metafunction represents. The representation of reality is achieved by means of a set of processes, along with the participants and the circumstances in which they unfold.

Malinowski is often cited as the pioneer of the theory of context in the 1920's and 1930's. In his account, Malinowski introduced two notions to cover the immediate environment and the larger cultural context, namely context of situation and context of culture. Context of situation refers to the immediate environment in which an utterance or a text unfolds while context of culture refers to those factors that are not immediately apparent but which must be considered in language use. In addition, Malinowski contends that context of situation is indispensable for the understanding of words "exactly as in the reality of spoken and written language, a word without linguistic context is a mere *figment* and stands for nothing by itself, so in the reality of the spoken living tongue, the utterance has no meaning except in the context of situation" (1923:307).

### **Linguistic Context**

The word *context* originated from the Latin *com* meaning "together" and *texere* meaning "to weave". Context from linguistic perspective is the connection or weaving together of the words or phrases surrounding a word to construct meaning. Similarly, the word context as used by Malinowski can refer to the surrounding text or the co-text. The concept can be broadened to embrace paralinguistic features such as facial expressions, gesture, bodily activities, the whole group of people present at the time of exchange of utterances and the part of environment (Malinowski 1935:22).

Firth builds on the notion of context from Malinowski's contribution. According to Firth (1957) language is being studied as part of the social process and language is what we may call "the systematics of phonetics and phonology, of grammatical categories or of semantics...a sort of scaffolding for the handling of events". Firth maintains that "contexts of situation and types of language can be grouped and classified"... (Firth, 1957:180-7).

On context of situation, Firth (1957) asserts that Malinowski's context of situation is a bit of the social process which can be considered apart and to which a speech event is central. Firth highlights some elements of context in the following direction:

- 
- a. The relevant features of participant; persons; personalities.
    - i) The verbal action of the participants
    - ii) The non-verbal action of the participants
  - b. The relevant objects
  - c. The effect of the verbal action

However another attempt in the explanation of the notion of context of situation came with the development of systemic functional linguistics championed by M.A.K. Halliday in the 1960's. According to Halliday, the semantic component of a text is construed in terms of three metafunctions; ideational, interpersonal and textual. The ideational metafunction is that part of the meaning which concerns the way external reality is represented in the text. According to Halliday, understanding the position of Systemic Functional Linguistics is the acceptance of linguistics as a scientific study of language. This implies that a linguistic study will be comprehensive: if it offers a coherent and viable account of 'the architecture of language' as system., Context as a theoretical category is crucial to any coherent account of the social aspects of the study of language.

In informal terms ideational metafunction might be thought of as the content of the message, and is probably what many think of first when we refer to a semantic component. This means that it is intimately concerned with the processes involved, whether they be actions, events or states, the entities involved in these processes, and the circumstances within which they take place.

The interpersonal metafunction concerns the relationships that exist between the speaker and his addressee(s), and between the speaker and his message. The textual metafunction is that part of the meaning potential which makes a text into a text, as opposed to a simple string of words or clauses. It thus involves phenomena such as thematic structure, information structure, and cohesion. In systemic functional linguistics, the context of situation is also described in terms of three dimensions: *Field of discourse*; *Tenor of discourse* and *Mode of discourse*. Halliday (1978:1423) proposes the following definitions:

### **Field – (The Social Action)**

That which is 'going-on' and has recognizable meaning in the social system; typically a complex of act in some ordered configuration and in which the text is some parts, and including subject - matter as one special aspect.

Specifically, field is what the text is about:

**Typical field** such as science, sports education medicine.

**Specialized vs. non-specialized** is the vocabulary specific to the field, or the vocabulary is common to other field?

### Tenor- (The Role Structure)

The cluster of socially meaningful participants' relationships; both permanent attributes of the participants and the role relationships that are specific to the situation, including the speech roles, those that come into being through the exchange of verbal meaning.

Specifically, tenor is the relationship between participants, it includes:

- (a) **Power relations** (unequal: father/daughter, teacher/student);
- (b) **formality** (formal / informal)
- (c) **closeness** (distant/ neutral/ close)

### Mode – (The Symbolic Organization)

The particular status that is assigned to the text within the situation: its function in relation to the social action and the role structure, including the channel or medium and the rhetorical mode. Specifically, mode consists of the following:

- (a) Role: *ancillary* (language accompanying nonverbal activity) or *consultative* (i.e. the event is defined by the language as in speech).
- (b) Channel: written vs. spoken, or mix.
- (c) Directionality: uni-directional channel or bi-directional ( monologue or dialogue)
- (d) Media: visual contact e.g., face-to face, telephone, multi-media etc.
- (e) Preparation: spontaneous vs. prepared

Textual meaning is embodied throughout the entire structure, since it determines the order in which the elements are arranged, as well as patterns of information structure just as in the clause (note for example, that the unmarked focus of information in a nominal group is on the word that comes last, not the word that functions as Thing).

The central idea to this theoretical explanation as proposed by Halliday and Hasan is based on the notion of the interdependency of language and context.

Any piece of text long or short, spoken or written will carry with it an indication of context. We only have to hear or read a section of it to know where it comes from. This means that we reconstruct from the text certain aspects of the situation, certain features of the field, the tenor and the mode. Given the text we construct the situation from it (Halliday and Hasan 1985:38).

### Conclusion

This article tends to support the claim by Halliday and Hasan pertaining language system and language function. This is in consideration of the fact that a text is an instance of language in use within a context of situation. The relationship between text and context is so paramount such that it allows for prediction. Therefore, reading a particular section of a text, one can predict the context in which the text was generated. Finally, the discussion in this paper presents an insight into the aspects of linguistic system, or of a language as network of system and the role of context in language use in the course of social interaction.

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## **30. Orientation as an Ultimate Parameter for the Lexical Signs in the Hausa Sign Language**

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The Hausa sign language is one of the non-verbal languages used by Hausa deaf and hard of hearing people for everyday communication. Information is conveyed visually, using a combination of manual and non-manual means of expression. The manual parameters are hand shape, hand posture, hand location, and orientation (hand motion). The non-manual parameters include head and body posture, facial expression, gaze and mouth movements. The latter encode, e.g., adjectives and adverbials, contribute to grammar or provide specialization of general items. The orientation is a final parameter used in concluding the lexical signs based on the language structure of LML (location, movement, location), and it involves palm facing and fingers. This paper aims to analysis and demonstrate the role of orientation in lexical signs production.

### **0. Introduction**

Signs languages are languages of those with special gift known as deaf people. These are languages that produce their lexical signs manually and non-manually. Stokoe (1960) analyzed sign formation in ASL and devised the first system for describing the signs in that language. Stokoe named his system cherology which is related to the word “phonology” used in analyzing spoken language. This system consists of three parameters, or cheremes (from the Greek word cheir, for hand). In sign language phonology, lexical items are traditionally described and analyzed in terms of four parameters (Corina and Sandler 1993; Sandler 1995; Stokoe 1978). A sign can be characterized by specifying its handshapes, the orientation of the hand, the location of the hand, and the movement that the hand makes. His three parameters are: the location of the sign (tabula or tab), the handshapes for forming the sign (designator or dez), and the movement of the body part forming the sign (signation or sign). Stokoe recommends that the parameters are handshapes, movement and location by themselves, meaningless elements, but can combine simultaneously to form signs in language in ways similar to the combining of phonemes to form meaningful units in spoken language. In Stokoe’s system, there are twelve tabs, nineteen dezes, and twenty-four sigs (Valli et al. 2005). A fourth parameter that is added to Stokoe’s system is orientation, which refers to the orientation of the palm and finger (s) extension. Not formally projected by Stokoe in his research, it was later added to the Stokoe system by Robbin Battison (1973, cited in Wilbur 1980).

However, the orientation parameter which needed for ASL is also needed in other sign languages and Hausa sign language as well. This study is trying to reveals function of orientation parameter in Hausa sign language. There is general harmony that there are three basic phonological parameters (or features classes) in sign language phonology: place

of articulation (POA), movement (MOV), handshapes (HS), and excluded a fourth parameter which is orientation (OR). Some researchers believe that it can be derived from handshapes and POA values (Liddell and Johnson, 1989; Crasborn and Klooij, 1997; Brentari, 1998). It appears to be a “subordinate category and not a ‘separate but equal’ articulator in the lexical representation of signs” (Sandler and Lillo-Martin, 2006:267). A fifth parameter is the non-manual part of a sign, but there is some debate whether this is phonetic or not. In some cases however, the non-manual features change the meaning of a sign.

### **1. Hausa Phonological parameters**

Hausa sign language comprises features belonging to the four parameter classes as found in other deaf languages by some researcher (Happ 2005; Keller and Launinger 2004; Prillwitz 2005). The phonological parameters are handshapes, movement, place of articulation and Hand Orientation.

### **2. Methods of Gathering Data**

This research examines daily use of the signs by Hausa deaf in ordinary dialogue in the Tudun Maliki Special School, and various centers of deaf learning as well as their dailies gathering joint respectively. On the aspect of examining language, data were collected through participatory observation. Here the research noticed that a lot of the Hausa signers, particularly the youth who are schooling do not know or forgotten some items or structures in their native language. Signs were systematically collected with a number of deaf people. However, words in spoken Hausa were presented to them and were asked to them produce the corresponding sign in their native language (Hausa sign language), On the other hand, signs were presented to them in context and they were asked to demonstrate their meanings. Photographs were taken for detailed analysis as well as written documents on sign languages. Furthermore substantial information was collected via participant observation and taking part in casual conversation in the following places:

- Special School for Deaf Tudun Maliki.
- Informal (daily meetings of the deaf at different places:-
- Tukuntawa deaf joint
- Rafin-Sale center for deaf as well as Kwana huxu in Gama quarters, and every day exchange with my neighbor deaf friends.

### **3. Orientation**

In this phonological parameter, palm and finger(s) extension occurs either on the body or space location. Orientation includes information about both the orientation of the palm of the hand and that of the extended fingers. Orientation may remain static within a mono-morpheme sign; it may also be dynamic.

### 3.1 Static Orientation

Static can be described with a set of three dual features for both palm and finger orientation, all with respect to the signer's body:

- (a) [ $\pm$  left]    [ $+$ left] means facing sideways towards the space next to the side of the body that is contralateral to the articulating right, dominant hand; [ $-$  left] refers to the opposite side.
- (b) [ $\pm$  up]:    [ $+$  up] means facing upwards; [ $-$ up] means facing downwards.
- (c) [ $\pm$  in]:    [ $+$  in] means that the palm is facing the signer's body; [ $-$  in] means that it is facing outwards (Schmaling, 2000: 84)

It is also possible to have combinations of these features. Once the orientation of the extended fingers is specified, there are only four options for palm orientation (Other combinations are physiologically impossible):

|             |                              |             |                              |
|-------------|------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| (a) Fingers | (b) Palm                     | (c) fingers | (d) Palm                     |
| [ $-$ up]   | [ $\pm$ in]<br>[ $\pm$ left] | [ $+$ up]   | [ $\pm$ in]<br>[ $\pm$ left] |
| [ $-$ left] | [ $\pm$ up]<br>[ $\pm$ in]   | [ $+$ left] | [ $\pm$ up]<br>[ $\pm$ in]   |
| [ $-$ in]   | [ $\pm$ up]<br>[ $\pm$ left] | [ $+$ in]   | [ $\pm$ up]<br>[ $\pm$ left] |

(Schmaling, 2000:84)

According to Schmaling (2000:84), believed that it is necessary to describe palm *ORI* and finger *ORI* separately in order to be able to distinguish between fingers pointing towards the body or to the left, both with the palm facing downwards. True minimal pairs for this parameter are less frequent than for the other parameters. The following sign pairs are identical in handshapes, locations and movement but have a different orientation:

### 3.2 Dynamic Orientation

Dynamic involves some kind of wrist movement. There are three different processes which including the rotating, bending and pivoting. We will discuss the scholar arguments below.

### 3.3 Argument on Orientation

In this component, we discuss issues on orientation. Let us begin with Stokoe's statement; he describes orientation as only part of the wrist specification when it used as a place of articulation in two-handed signs. Then, Battison (1974, 1978) and others (e.g., Friedman, 1977; Frishberg, 1975; Wilbur, 1979). Proposed to considered orientation as an

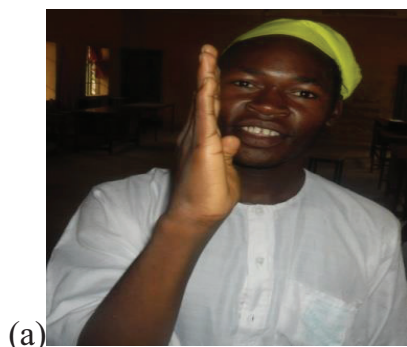
independent parameter, they argued that it was the ultimate parameter that could distinguish certain minimal pairs. Other scholars are of the view that orientation does not have the same phonological connotation as other three parameters because selection of different orientation options can be rather more variable than other options. Klima/Bellugi (1979), suggested orientation is one of the three ‘minor parameters’ together with ‘contacting region’ and hand arrangement which should be regarded as sub-classifications of hand configuration; “Whereas major parameters distinguish very large classes of signs, minor parameters distinguish limited sets of minimal pairs, yet further differentiate signs” (Klima/Bellugi (1979:50). Sandler (1989) and others treat orientation as an elaboration of hand configuration, but for the purpose of this study, we propose that the view of (Battison 1974, 1978; Friedman, 1977; Frishberg, 1975; Wilbur, 1979) which is suit to our analysis in this study. Therefore, we are demonstrating the main function of orientation in Hausa Sign Language.

#### **4. Hausa Sign Language Orientation**

These four basic, and independently meaningless units, when combined, produce all signs in the lexicon of not only ASL but all the established sign languages in the world. It was this simple observation, that signs are not holistic gestures, which instigated a minor revolution in the methodology of sign language research. Hausa Sign Language makes use of the same basic phonological parameters found in other sign languages. One minimal pairs for hand shapes, movement, location, and orientation are study here to demonstrate that they are phonemically contrastive in HSL Hausa sign language. Orientation is one of the parameters uses to complete the lexical sign in all sign languages and Hausa as well. It is a parameter that describes palm facing direction and finger (s) extension. Orientation in Hausa sign language functions on three phrases. Still, it is well-documented that most symmetrical signs are symmetrical across the transverse left-right axis in sign languages (Napoli/Wu 2003; Sutton-Spence/Kaneko 2007).

##### **4.1 Orientation of Palm right/left and finger(s) extension**

In the first orientation phrases which consist of palm right/left and finger(s) extension. Palm right, means facing sideways towards the space next to the side of the body that is contralateral to the articulating right, dominant hand. While palm left refers to the opposite side and finger (s) extended is specified, as Schmalin (2000:84) stated above. Here are some examples:



(a)



(b)

In the above picture (a), we can see how the TIMRL structure. The index, middle, ring and little fingers extended and thumb bended while palm facing left side of the signer. Picture (b) describes the extension of TIMRL with bending on phlegm joint. From what we have discuss above, we can see how the orientation parameter differentiate and give a clear meaning for the signs above, but if three parameters employed in signing production, the signs would not be complete unless orientation parameter applied. Formerly, if orientation is unapplied the sign became meaningless.

#### 4.2 Orientation of Palm up/down and finger (s) extension

This category shows how orientation demonstrates the function of palm and fingers. When palm up simply means facing upwards and palm downwards means to face downwards and finger (s) extended. Below pictures describe the orientation of palm up/down as well as fingers formation.

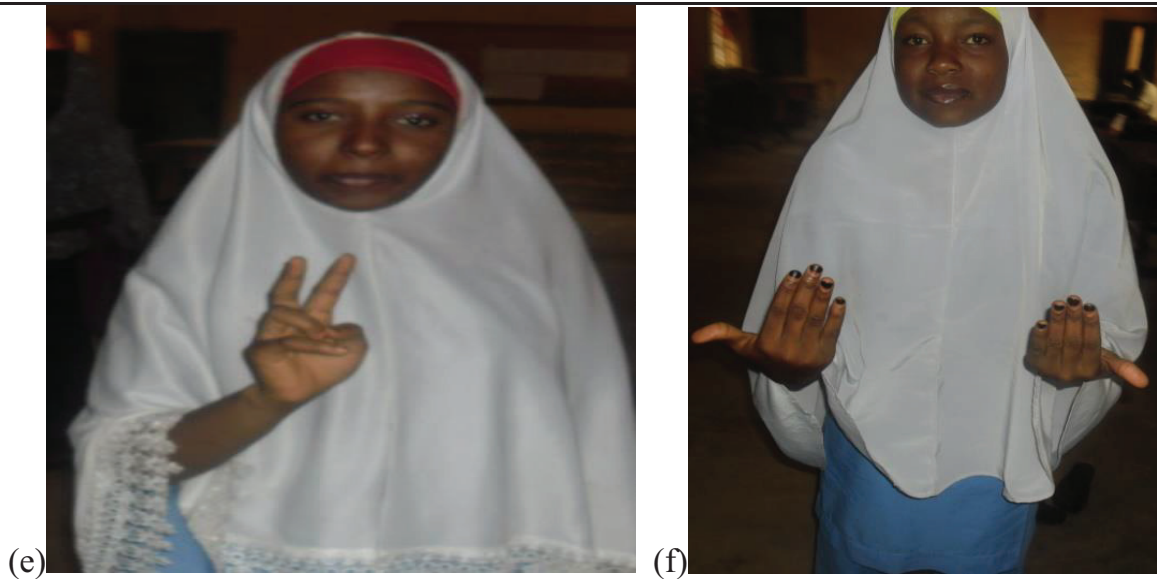


The Hausa Sign Language (HSL) minimal pair for palm orientation, up and down and fingers selection. In picture (c), displays palm facing up while all fingers extended, then picture (d) describes palm facing down and extension of TIMRL fingers. Here, orientation parameter functioning as instrument distinguished signs. No sign can be significant unless the four parameters are applying in forming any sign. As we can from pictures (c) and (d), orientation is the parameter which shows and differentiate each sign structure and meaning as well.

#### 4.3 Orientation of Palm inwards/outwards and finger (s) extension

In this type of orientation, palm function as inwards which means the palm is facing the signer's body while palm outwards simply means to facing away to the signer's as well as to presenting finger(s) extended as it showing in pictures below.





The above pictures demonstrating how the palm inwards or outwards formed as well as fingers are structure. As we can see from sign in picture (e), the palm facing away from the signer with an extension of index and middle fingers as well as wrinkle of thumb, ring and little fingers. Hence, picture (f) exhibited how palm is facing to the signer and TIMRL (thumb, index, middle, ring and little fingers) extended and thumb spread. Here we can see the role played by the orientation parameter in both signing production. If hand shapes and movement as well as location employing in the production of sign without using orientation parameter, the sign do not possess any mean except orientation parameter attached to the three parameters (hand shapes, movement and location) mentioned above then, the sign become meaningful. Therefore, orientation is an ultimate parameter functions as a key that can differentiate meaning of various signs in any sign languages.

## 5. Conclusion

This research describes the function of ultimate parameter known as orientation which possesses feature of hand shapes, movement and location. Orientation is an independent parameter and function as other three parameters perform in producing any signs in sign language. Any sign cannot be complete and meaningful unless orientation parameter involved but, if only three parameters are utilize in forming any sign, the sign cannot be complete and meaningful unless orientation involved. Orientation is the only parameter that completes the sign and meaning as well. This showing that signs without orientation is like soup without salt in sign language. Orientation is only parameter that differentiates among signs meaning in any sign language including of Hausa Sign Language. From this study we can believe that orientation is an independent not dependent parameter as some scholars in sign languages viewed. The study requires the involvement of linguists, deaf signers and computer scientists for documenting issues relate to this province.

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## **31. A Comparative Study of the Rhythm of Fulfulde and Hausa**

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Fulfulde and Hausa are languages that are widely spoken in West and Central Africa by people who call themselves Fulbe and Hausawa, respectively. While Fulfulde is genetically classified under the West-Atlantic group of languages, Hausa is a member of the Chadic family (Greenberg, 1970). Though a lot of research have been conducted on these languages, rhythm, which is an important element of phonology appears to be less investigated. The aims of this paper are to acoustically analyse the rhythm of Fulfulde and Hausa, to compare the rhythmic patterning of these languages, and to classify them based on the rhythmic classes of languages. Six speakers of Fulfulde and six speakers of Hausa were recorded and measured. PRAAT software was used for all segmentations and measurements, while two rhythmic indexes, nPVI (Grabe & Low, 2002) and Varco V (Dellwo, 2006) were used to determine the rhythm of the languages. The findings show that Fulfulde and Hausa are syllable-timed, but along a continuum; Fulfulde is more stress-timed than Hausa.

### **1. Introduction**

Rhythm in speech is an issue that is much discussed in the fields of phonetics and phonology. As far back as 1945, Pike had impressionistically classified the languages of the world into two groups (syllable- and- stress-timed) and later on, Bloch (1950) suggested a third rhythmic class known as mora-timed. Early investigations tried various methods to provide evidence for this classification but were unsuccessful, until the advent of rhythmic indexes such as Ramus, et al. (1999); Grabe & Low (2002); Dellwo (2006) among others. Investigations (cf. Abercrombie, 1967, 1976; Ramus, 1999; Gut, Adouakou & Gibbon, 2002; Grabe & Low, 2002) adopted the isochrony model and have tried in various methods to provide the evidence for this classification as well as to classify languages that were not rhythmically classified.

For over a century, Fulfulde and Hausa attracted maximum academic attention from seasoned scholars and as such, a lot of research have been conducted on the phonology of the languages, but rhythm, which is an important aspect of phonology appeared to be less investigated, as none of the available literature in Fulfulde discussed its rhythm in any detail, and as far as I am aware, the little that has so far been mentioned on the rhythm of Hausa seems to be impressionistic. Through instrumental methods, the current paper aims at describing the rhythm of Fulfulde and Hausa and to further classify the languages base on their rhythmic patterns. To achieve these objectives, three research questions were set to give clearer and specific direction to the current investigation.

- a. What are the acoustic correlates of the rhythm of Fulfulde and Hausa?
- b. How does the rhythm of Fulfulde compare with that of Hausa?

- 
- c. How does the rhythm of Fulfulde and Hausa compare with the prototypical rhythmic classes (syllable- timed, stress- timed and mora-timed)?

## 2. Rhythm Measures

For the fact that this paper focuses on an acoustic analysis of the rhythm of Fulfulde and Hausa languages, it would be important to give a brief account of what linguistic rhythm is, and to discuss some of the progresses made on rhythm measurements, albeit briefly. This would further shade light on the theoretical basis of the indexes used in this study. Rhythm has been defined by Gut, Adouakou & Gibbon (2002) as the periodic recurrence of events, which in stress-timed languages are stress beats and in syllable-timed languages syllables. Abercrombie (1967, p. 96) sees speech rhythm as ‘essentially a muscular rhythm, and the muscles concerned are the breathing muscles’. As such, in syllable-timed languages ‘chest-pulses, and hence the syllables, recur at equal intervals of time – thus they are isochronous’ (p. 97). They are isochronous in the sense that ‘they are assumed to be equal in length’ (duration) (p. 98). In this case, stress-pulses are unevenly spaced. Abercrombie mentioned French, Telugu and Yoruba as examples of syllable-timed languages. On the other hand, languages such as English and Dutch are said to be stress-timed. Such languages are supposed to have regular recurring stress beats with the same time interval separating two beats of equal length (Gut, Adouakou & Gibbon, 2002). This would result into some kind of variation since there is difference in the number of syllables between each two stress beats, hence the syllable length is adjusted to fit into the stress interval and is therefore very variable in stress-timed languages.

The concern of phoneticians however, is not limited to the theoretical explanation of this phenomenon, but to also provide an acoustic evidence on the source of linguistic rhythm so that the phonological cues responsible for the rhythmic patterning of languages would be understood. Several unsuccessful attempts have been made to find out the rhythmic correlates of languages until the advent of acoustic indexes aiming at calculating syllabic and consonantal durations to provide an evidence on the isochrony model proposed by Pike (1945) and Abercrombie (1967). Among these are Pairwise Variability Index known as PVI (Low, Grabe & Nolan, 2000) which takes into consideration, the duration of adjacent segments in an utterance. For a sequence of units of syllables of length  $m$ , for instance, the average of the absolute differences between adjacent units is calculated. PVI could be raw (rPVI) or normalized (nPVI), the former being calculated without normalization. As for nPVI, the mean differences obtained in successive durations are divided by the sum of interval durations of the syllables, the last step being referred to as normalization. This reduces the differences in tempo across the utterance and between utterances (Gibbon & Gut, 2001), and is therefore used to cater for variations in speech rate.

Dellwo (2006) came up with a rate-normalized metrics known as Varco C and Varco V. In Varco C, the standard deviation of consonantal interval durations is divided by mean of consonantal durations. The result is normalized by multiplying it by 100. The same formula is applied in Varco V, with the only difference lying in calculating the vocalic durations instead of consonantal durations. Varco V therefore, equals the standard deviation of the intervals of vocalic durations which is divided by the mean vocalic intervals. This is also normalized by multiplying by 100.



In what appears to be a close modification of the PVI, Gibbon & Gut (2001) developed an index known as the Rhythm Ratio (RR), in where for each pair of adjacent syllables, the shorter is divided by the longer. The average of all the ratios is multiplied by 100. Thus, when the RR equals 100, it is a case of perfect syllable- timing. In other words, the lower the degree of syllable- timing, the lower the RR value. Gibbon & Gut found that BrE was more stress-timed than both Ibibio and NigE. From the foregoing discussions, it appears that rhythm in languages is a subject that had so far attracted much scholarly attention. Though the attempts by phoneticians to provide the acoustic basis for the rhythmic classes of languages seems not to be too satisfactory (Gibbon & Gut, 2002) it is evident that rhythm indexes such as PVI (Grabe & Low, 2002), Varco V (Dellwo, 2006), RR (Gibbon & Gut, 2002) provides a sufficient insight on the rhythmic correlates of languages and thus could be used to classify languages based on their rhythmic patterns.

## 2.1. Basic Phonology of the Languages

### 2.1.1 Fulfulde

After the UNESCO 1966 conference at Bamako, Fulfulde has been described as a language with 27 basic consonants. Although there are slight variations, Fulfulde consonants have been said to be quite homogeneous throughout the Fulaphone (Girei, 2009). Due to contact with neighbouring languages such as Arabic, Hausa and other languages especially in Adamawa area, foreign consonants have been incorporated into the phonemic inventory of the language. For example, the consonant /tʃ/ has been substituted with /ʃ/ in most positions in the Gombe dialect, while a new sound /v/ has for long been introduced into the Adamawa dialect of Fulfulde, and /z/ has been realized in some loan words from Arabic and Hausa. Though some scholars of Fulfulde linguistics (cf. Taylor, 1921; East, 1934; Gottschligg, 1995; Gieri, 2009) commented on the new sounds, others (Arnott, 1969, 1970, 1974; Stennes, 1967; Breedveld, 1995; McIntosh, 1984) totally ignored these innovations and do not consider them as part of the phonemic inventory of the language. These sounds can therefore be treated as new innovations peculiar to the respective dialects where they occur. Indeed, “considering the whole area where Fulfulde is spoken, [ʃ] is an uncommon variant of [tʃ]” and so is [v] to [w] in the Adamawa dialect.

Fulfulde consonants include: Plosives /p, b, t, d, k, g, ʔ, ʔj/; Implosives /ɓ, ɗ/; Prenasalized plosives /mb, nd, ŋg/; Fricatives /f, s, h/; Affricates /tʃ, dʒ/; Prenasalized Affricate /ndʒ/; Nasals /m, n, ɲ, ŋ/; Roll /r/; Lateral /l/ and Approximants /w, j/. In standardized Fulfulde orthography, the affricates [tʃ], [dʒ] and the pre-nasalized affricate [ndʒ] are written as /c/, /j/ and /nj/ respectively. Similarly, [j] is written as /y/, the palatal [ɲ], palatalized glottal [ʔj] and glottal [ʔ] are written as /ny/, /y/ and /ʔ/ respectively. All the rest of the consonants are written in the same form both in phonemic and orthographic writing. Fulfulde has 10 monophthongs, 5 short [i, u, e, o, a] with their long counterparts [i: u: e: o: a:] and 8 possible diphthongs [ai, av, ei, ev, iu, ou, ɔu, ɔv]. The diphthongs are formed by a basic vowel, followed by a glide; either palatal /j/ or velar /w/.

The syllable structures that are possible in Fulfulde nominal stems and verbal roots are: CV, CVC, CVVC, CVCC and CVV. Girei (2009) asserts that the five syllable structures are generally possible across the Fulaphone. Fulfulde is a stress language,

thus lexical stress is realized and is phonemic. Breedveld (1995, p. 136) provides the following stress placement rules: Stress occurs on the penultimate (the last non-final heavy) syllable with CVC or CVV structure as in [bá'lɛ:ɗɔ], where the penultimate syllable is weak, (that is, it is not CVC or CVV) stress is pushed back to the preceding heavy syllable as in ['ɗɔ:ɗɔrgal]. In the absence of a heavy syllable, stress falls on the first syllable irrespective of its structure as in ['kɔsɲgal], and the last syllable in nouns is extra-metrical and does not receive stress except in some loan words such as [ɪf'rɪm]. Unlike in nouns, the last syllable in verbs is not extrametrical, thus it can receive stress. This can be shown in the word [tɛalmɪna'na:].

Fulfulde is an intonational language and tone is not phonemic (McIntosh, 1984). Arnott (1970, p. 62) states that "...in Fulfulde, the main outline of the pitch contours of the sentence are determined by the type of sentence rather than by the tonal characteristics of individual words or complexes". There are variations as to the way in which individual words fit into the sentence intonation patterns with individual words or types of words; the intonation pattern may be to some extent, affected by the presence or absence of some specific particles within the sentence.

### 2.1.2 Hausa

Hoffmann and Schachter (1969, p. 74) identified 29 distinct consonants of Hausa, while Schuh and Yalwa (1999, p. 91) suggested 31 phonetically contrastive consonants. However, Sani (2005, p. 4) suggested that the Standard form of Hausa has a total of 34 consonants which include Plosives /b, t, d, kj, gj, k, g, kw, gw, kj, gj, ʔ, ʔj/; Implosives /ɓ, ɗ/; Ejectives /s', kj, k, kw/; Fricatives /ɸ, ɸj, s, z, ʃ, h/; Affricates /tʃ, dʒ/; Nasals /m, n/; Flap/Tap /ɾ, ɾj/; Lateral /l/; trill /r/ and Approximants /j, w/. As for vowels, there are phonologically 10 monophthongs and 2 diphthongs in Hausa. Though there is yet to be an exhaustive contrastive analysis of the two languages, the most similar aspect of Fulfulde and Hausa phonologies is perhaps the vowel system. Evidence to the pending fact is that Hausa monophthongs are very identical to that of Fulfulde so much that they consist of 10-vowel system that are made of 5 short vowels [i, u, e, o, a] and their long counterparts [i: u: e: o: a:]. One of the Hausa diphthongs [ai] is formed by a sequence of a low vowel /a/ followed by a palatal /j/, while the other [au] is made of a low vowel /a/ followed by a velar /w/. The vowel pronunciation is usually stable in all positions, though the long vowels are higher in position than their short counterparts.

Unlike Fulfulde, Hausa is a tonal language with three sets of tones; high, low and falling. The high ( ´ ) and low ( ` ) tones are said to occur on all types of syllables. A falling tone usually occurs on CVC syllables or on CV syllables with a long vowel or diphthong. To flash back on the syllable structure, CV, CVC and CN are the structures possible in Hausa. It is worth noting that syllables written with an initial vowel have initial consonant /ʔ/ in the background, but this consonant is not indicated in the orthography. Hoffmann and Schachter (1969) note that while /n/ and /ɾ/ are common at the end of a word-final CVC, only short vowels occur in a CVC structure. Similarly, several other restrictions apply on the final C as well as the non-word-final CVC structures. CC syllable is only possible in the middle where the first C is a final consonant of a preceding syllable followed by initial C of the following syllable as in the word /kullum/. Hausa has a drift pattern of intonation. This implies that in a sequence high-low-high-low, each subsequent high is somewhat lower in pitch than the preceding

high, and same occurs for succeeding lows, but with less pitch declination than for the highs (Schuh and Yalwa, 1999). Since Hausa is a tonal language, stress is not phonemic. However, there is an emphatic stress that usually occur on particular words such as *duka* “all”.

### 3. Methodology

Ladefoged (2006) suggests that a data aimed at phonetic description of a language is best collected from native speakers who use the language in their daily activities. Based on this, six native speakers of Fulfulde (Adamawa dialect) and six natives of Hausa (Kano dialect) were recorded. Research reveals that there are differences between male and female physical shapes of speech organs which results into the differences found between male and female speech. As such, only male speakers of the two languages were recorded and analysed. All speakers of both languages lived most of their lives within the areas of Adamawa or Kano as the case may be, and each of them hold first degrees in various Arts-related fields of study from various Nigerian Universities. All respondents are of similar age ranging between 30 to 35 years, noting that age difference could be another variable that affects speech samples and acoustic measurements.

The translated versions of the phonetic text ‘North Wind and the Sun’ (IPA, 1999) which is a text from phonetic research (Grabe & Low, 2003) was used as reading materials for recording. The Hausa version of the fable ‘*Iska da Rana*’ has been published in IPA (1999), (appendix II), while the Fulfulde version ‘*Henndu Dabbunde e Naange*’ (appendix I) was translated by Shehu (2014). For quality recording, Fulfulde speakers were recorded in a sound-proof room of Radio Gotel, Yola, whereas Hausa speakers were recorded in a quiet room, fully carpeted with all windows closed and electrical devices switched off. In the case of Hausa speakers, a Sensonic (Sony) voice recorder was used, while for Fulfulde speakers, recording gadgets in the sound-proof room were used for the recording.

The translated versions of the text were distributed to respondents 3 days prior to recording so that they would be familiar with it, and as such some gaps caused by difficulty in reading were reduced to the barest minimum. Speakers were asked to read the Fulfulde or Hausa version of the text as the case may be, while a recorder is been placed to record the read speech. Where speakers were doubtful of their reading, they were asked to read and be recorded for the second time. Similarly, speakers were asked to mention their names, addresses, time and date of recording, and to state their consent for the recording. In addition to the verbal consent, all participants signed a consent form, and were made to understand that the data was meant for research purposes only, and that they can withdraw from the research at any time without being subjected to any questioning or loss of benefits they were entitled to before withdrawal.

### 4. Data Analysis

The read speech for each participant was segmented into utterances; each utterance was then placed on PRAAT (version 5.3.63) by Paul Boersma and David Weenink (1992-2014) with which durations of successive vowels in each utterance were measured (see appendix III). Two rounds of measurements (with an interval of two weeks) were conducted for both languages. A Pearson correlation of the measurement was conducted

to test the inter-measurement reliability. The result ( $r=0.99$ ) shows a high level of consistency in measurements.

The values obtained from measurements of the intervocalic intervals were calculated using the normalized Pairwise Variability Index (nPVI). PVI (Grabe & Low, 2002) takes into consideration, the sequential variability of the vowels or consonants by averaging the durational difference between the consecutive vowels or consonantal intervals via this formula:

$$\text{nPVI} = 100 \left[ \sum_{k=1}^{m-1} \left| \frac{d_k - d_{k+1}}{(d_k + d_{k+1})/2} \right| / (m - 1) \right]$$

Where ‘m’ refers to the ‘number of items in an utterance’, ‘d’ refers to the ‘duration of the kth item’, (Grabe & Low, 2002, p. 3).

A second rhythm metric known as Varco V (Dellwo, 2006) was used to validate the results of the measurements. In Varco V, the standard deviation of vowels is divided by the mean vocalic interval multiplied by 100. Varco V is calculated via the following formula:

$$\text{VarcoV} = \frac{\Delta V}{V} \times 100$$

Where  $\Delta V$  refers to the standard deviation of the vocalic interval and  $V$  refers to the mean duration of the vocalic intervals.

Two different indexes were used in this study because Loukina, Kochanski, Shih, Keane & Watson (2009) found that the use of two rhythm metrics was found to be more effective at classifying languages compared to one. Similarly, the choice of nPVI and Varco V was justified by White & Mattys (2007) who found that nPVI and Varco V were more sensitive in classifying language groups and are very robust to variation in articulation rate.

## **5. Results and Discussion**

### **5.1 nPVI**

Measurements were done for both Fulfulde and Hausa. Table 1 shows the average nPVI values obtained for each speaker as well as the overall nPVI average for the speakers of both languages. As can be seen from Table 1, the nPVI values obtained for Fulfulde speakers were higher than those for Hausa speakers except speakers B and C, where Fulfulde speaker C had the least nPVI value of 43.17, Hausa speaker B had the highest nPVI scores of 46.25.

**Table 1:** Average nPVI Scores Obtained for Fulfulde and Hausa

| <b>Fulfulde</b>   |                    | <b>Hausa</b>      |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Respondent</b> | <b>nPVI Scores</b> | <b>Respondent</b> | <b>nPVI Scores</b> |
| A                 | 47.87              | A                 | 32.70              |
| B                 | 45.42              | B                 | 46.25              |
| C                 | 43.17              | C                 | 45.65              |
| D                 | 45.45              | D                 | 33.70              |
| E                 | 44.04              | E                 | 42.50              |
| F                 | 49.53              | F                 | 35.99              |
| <b>Average</b>    | <b>45.91</b>       | <b>Average</b>    | <b>39.46</b>       |

Though Fulfulde speakers produced varied nPVI scores, the differences between the averages for all the speakers is somewhat marginal as the highest score was 49.53 and the least 43.17. In general, the average nPVI values obtained for Fulfulde ( $M = 45.91$ ,  $SD = 2.38$ ) is higher than the average nPVI values obtained for Hausa ( $M = 39.46$ ,  $SD = 6.07$ ). The two-tailed independent  $t$ -test (two-sample assuming equal variance) shows a marginal difference ( $t = 2.01$ ,  $df = 10$ ,  $p = 0.04$ ;  $d = 1.4$ ). Cohen's effect size value ( $d = 1.4$ ) suggests a high practical significance. This implies that the rhythm of Fulfulde as spoken by the subjects of this study showed more variability in successive vowel durations compared to Hausa.

## 5.2 Varco V Results

The Varco V results are similar to the findings in the nPVI. The Varco V scores for Fulfulde and Hausa speakers as well as the overall average for both languages are presented in Table 2. As can be seen from Table 2, the Varco V scores obtained for all Fulfulde speakers are higher than that for their Hausa counterparts as most Fulfulde speakers except speakers B, and E, obtained scores around 40 and above, whereas only Hausa speaker C, obtained Varco V scores of up to 40.

**Table 2:** Average Varco V Scores obtained for Fulfulde and Hausa

| <b>Fulfulde</b>   |                       | <b>Hausa</b>      |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Respondent</b> | <b>Varco V Scores</b> | <b>Respondent</b> | <b>Varco V Scores</b> |
| A                 | 41.27                 | A                 | 36.96                 |
| B                 | 35.67                 | B                 | 36.00                 |
| C                 | 39.28                 | C                 | 40.30                 |
| D                 | 41.13                 | D                 | 36.88                 |
| E                 | 35.55                 | E                 | 35.33                 |
| F                 | 40.80                 | F                 | 37.72                 |
| <b>Average</b>    | <b>38.95</b>          | <b>Average</b>    | <b>37.19</b>          |



These results indicate that the Varco V scores obtained for Fulfulde speakers ( $M = 38.95$ ,  $SD = 2.7$ ) is higher than the Varco V average for Hausa ( $M = 37.19$ ,  $SD = 1.7$ ). An independent two-tailed  $t$ -test (two-sample assuming equal variance) showed a significant difference ( $t = 0.8$ ,  $df = 10$ ,  $p = 0.2$ ;  $d = 0.9$ ). Cohen's effect size value ( $d = 0.9$ ) suggested a high practical significance. The difference found in this analysis suggests that there is more variation in the overall vowel duration in an utterance for Fulfulde speakers than for Hausa speakers.

### 5.3 Discussion

The higher average nPVI value obtained for Fulfulde (45.91) as compared to (39.46) for Hausa suggests that Fulfulde exhibits more characteristics of stress-timing compared to Hausa. In PVI, scores tend to be higher when there are variations in adjacent vowels, therefore, the implication in this result would be that Fulfulde is spoken with more varied vowel durations compared to Hausa, in that, the nPVI values for most Fulfulde speakers is higher than the nPVI values for most Hausa speakers (see table 5.1). This is even more evident in the overall nPVI mean, as the average for Fulfulde is higher than that for Hausa. In other words, the difference in duration between adjacent vowels is relatively smaller in Hausa than in Fulfulde.

Moreover, the Varco V results obtained for both languages are similar to the findings for the nPVI. Apart from Hausa speakers C, and F, all Fulfulde speakers produced higher Varco V scores compared to the rest of the Hausa speakers which means there are more variations in the overall vowel duration in an utterance for Fulfulde speakers than for Hausa speakers. The higher mean for Varco V found in Fulfulde (38.95) as compared to the mean for Hausa (37.19) albeit marginal, shows that Hausa is more syllable-timed than Fulfulde. This is to say, if the standard deviation of vocalic durations in an utterance is taken into consideration, more variations are likely to be found in Fulfulde than in Hausa.

In comparison with the findings of Grabe & Low (2002), the average nPVI scores for both Fulfulde and Hausa show that the languages pair with the syllable-timed French, and the mixed or unclassified languages such as Catalan, Polish, Romanian and Welsh, which in Grabe & Low, had nPVI values between 40 to 50. Gut, et al. (2001) found that three African languages (Ibibio, Anyi and Ega) exhibit a syllable-timed rhythm. In comparison, the averages for Fulfulde and Hausa obtained in the present study pair with the averages obtained in both Rhythm Index (RI) and Rhythm Ratio (RR) for the three languages investigated in Gut, et al. (2002).

### 6. Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations

The results of this research show that both Fulfulde and Hausa exhibit more characteristics of being syllable-timed. This is evident in both nPVI and Varco V results presented in tables 1 and 2. Consecutive vowel durations measured in nPVI and the standard deviation of the overall vowel durations in an utterance measured in Varco V showed less variability and this indicates that the duration of the vocalic intervals is similar, a characteristic that is attributed to syllable-timed languages. Though the rhythm of both languages is syllable-timed, but along the continuum, the rhythm of Hausa is more syllable-timed than that of Fulfulde. In comparison, both Fulfulde and

Hausa pair with prototypical syllable-timed languages such as French, Spanish and Catalan in both Grabe & Low (2002) and Dellwo (2006).

Just like other researches, however, some limitations are identified in this research. First, the number of participants in this study is not very substantial, and as such, the data samples used in this investigation might not be enough to draw wide generalizations based on the results of the study. More so, there were only male participants in this investigation and as such there might exist some differences if female speakers were to be analysed. Similarly, this investigation is limited to only Adamawa and Kano dialects of Fulfulde and Hausa respectively, and researches (cf. Gut, 2001; Tan & Low, 2013) show that varieties of the same language, e.g. British, Nigerian, Malaysian and Singaporean Englishes exhibit different rhythmic patterns. Therefore, more research is required into the aspects of the rhythm of both languages which would consider larger and more varied data, and to investigate the rhythm of other varieties of the languages.

### **Abbreviations**

|         |   |                                                  |
|---------|---|--------------------------------------------------|
| PVI     | - | Pairwise Variability Index                       |
| rPVI    | - | Raw Pairwise Variability Index                   |
| nPVI    | - | Normalized Pairwise Variability Index            |
| Varco V | - | Vowel Coefficient                                |
| PRAAT   | - | A software designed for speech spectral analysis |

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## APPENDIX I

### Henndu Dabbunde e Naange

Henndu dabbunde feewndu e naange ngeddootirii dow moye buri nyaadugo. Henndu wi'i burii naange nyaadugo nden naange maa wi'i burii henndu nyaadugo. E dum nder geddi ɗin sey jahoowo wari e bornii toggoore jaangol. Nde henndu e naange eewi jahoowo, sey naange e henndu mbi'i "yawwaa" hannde en ittay geddi". Artudo bortugo goddo o'o toggoore maako fuu kanum burin yaadugo. Donni henndu fuddi fuufuki peewol ngam ndu wada mo o bortoo toggoore maako. Nde o nani peewol henndu kam don maa o besdi taaraago nde. Ngam non sey henndu tampi no wada, tiidal maaru nafaay, doole maaru ndu munyi. Don e don naange fuddi kuugal maage. Habaa, nde naange meedi fettoygo nguli maage kam, sey don e don jahoowo kam bortii toggoore maako ko yaawi. Ngam non geddi timmii, ɓe fuu ɓe ciwtake henndu gonɗinii naange burii ndu nyaadugo.

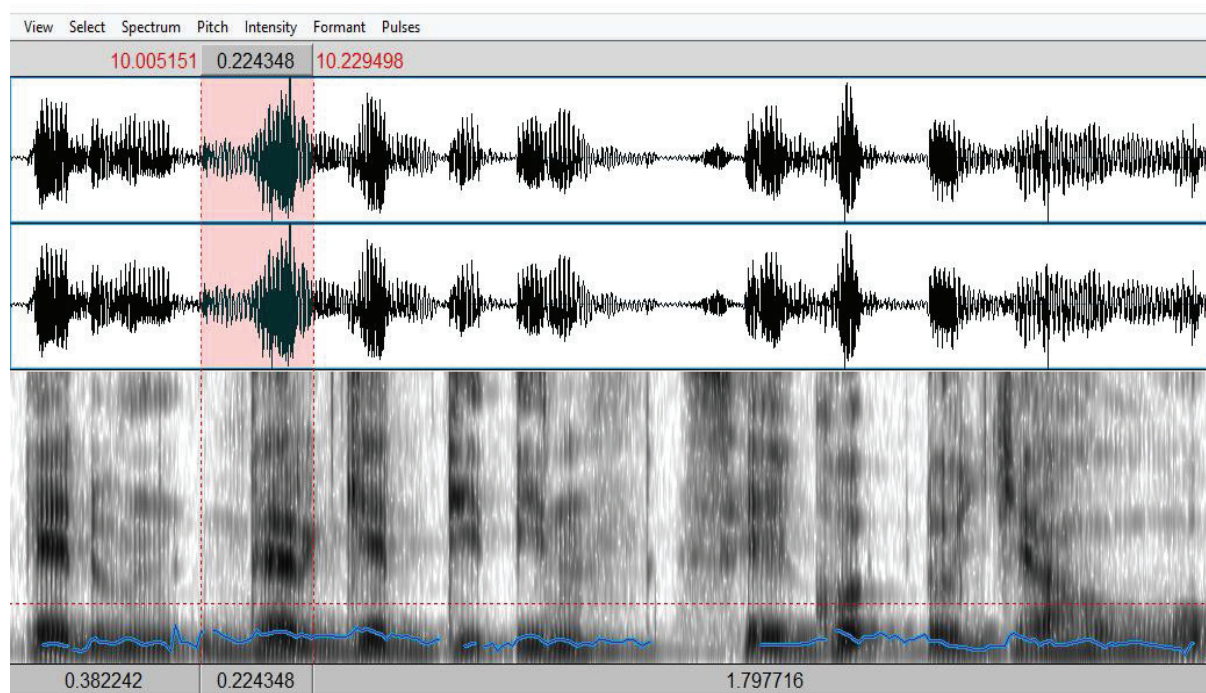
## Appendix II

### Iska Da Rana

Wata rana, da iskar hunturu ta arewa da rana suka yi gardama a kan kowace ce daga cikinsu ta fi karfi. To, suna cikin wannan gardama, sai ga wani matafiyi ya zo sanye da rigar sanyi. To shikenan, sai iskar hunturu da rana suka yi yarjejeniya a kan yau za'a yi kure don a ga ko wa zai iya sa matafiyin ya tube rigarsa a kan tilas. To, shi ke nan, sai iskar hunturu ta buso sanyinta da karfi iya yinta, amma ina?! Sai ta kasa sa shi wannan matafiyi ya kwabe rigarsa, don kuwa ya dandanne rigar gam gam a jikinsa. To daga karshe dai, sai iska ta sallam, daga nan ne kuma, ita rana ta shiga nata aikin. Ai ko rana sai ta buɗo haskenta da zafinta warwar. Haba! Kan ka ce me, sai gashi wannan mutum, matafiyi, ya kwabe rigarsa, ba girma da arziki. Ganin haka kuwa, sai iska dole ta amince a kan cewa, lalle rana ta fi ta karfi.

## Appendix III

*Spectrum for the word 'nder' as pronounced by speaker A*





## **32. Phonological Processes in Verb Inflection in C'lela**

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The most common inflectional categories found in C'lela are the nominal and verbal categories. The discussion in this paper focuses mainly on the phonology of verb inflection in the language. The paper accounts for phonological processes associated with verb inflection in C'lela. It argues that when the perfective suffix [-kV] attaches to verb stem in C'lela, it triggers certain morphophonological processes namely, vowel copying, metathesis, vowel lengthening, vowel deletion, and assimilation; while complementary distribution results from the addition of the future marking prefix [t-] or the alternative future marking suffix [-n] to the subject pronoun that usually precedes a verb.

### **0. Introduction**

C'lela, listed with the codes ISO 639-3 [dri], is a Niger-Congo, Benue-Congo, Western Kainji sub-language family (Lewis et al. 2015). It is the language of the Lelna (or the Dakarkari) people spoken in the eastern part of Kebbi State, and some part of Kontagora in Niger State, Nigeria (Williamson 1989). However, more recent classification puts C'lela as Northwest Kainji subgroup of Benue-Congo, together with Hun-Saare (Duka), Utma'in (Fakai), and other languages within Gwamhi-Wuri cluster (McGill and Blench 2012, Lewis et al. 2015).

It is worth pointing out that in the C'lela orthography, an apostrophe '/' is postposed on the verb suffixes at phonetic level in order to distinguish them from pronouns. The Committee for the Standardization of C'lela Orthography (CSCO)<sup>2</sup>, proposed the Orthography for the language which was perhaps designed based on the writing system established in some other published work.

Again, the CSCO suggests the use of underscored e, to represent the phoneme [ɛ], o to represent [ɔ] and a to represent the near close-mid central vowel [ə] in the current language writing system. The use of an apostrophe and underlining of phonemes in the language orthography is probably adopted based on the principles of convenience, harmonization and familiarity/acceptability as proposed by experts such as Williamson (1984), Simons (1994) and Barnwell 1998). Some related Kainji languages like Kambari (Stark 2010, Crozier 2012), Tyap (katab), and Tsureshe (Harley 2012, Blench and McGill n.d) have adopted this phenomenon of alternate vowel representation. In these languages, like C'lela, the schwa central phoneme [ə] is orthographically represented as the underlined symbol a; while the Ut-Ma'in [gel] current orthography uses the underlined vowel u in place of the near close-mid central vowel [ə] (Smith 2007). This study adapts the current proposed writing system for C'lela.

The data for this work were drawn from unstructured interview with native speakers and the C'lela Dictionary (Rikoto et al. 2002). In the description of the morphophonological problems presented by the data in this paper, we adopt the generative phonology framework Chomsky and Halle (1968).

Additionally, the study adopts a stem method or unitary base hypothesis as against root method. In the unitary hypothesis, the base of a given word formation process comprises a unitary and specified morphosyntactic word with no disjunction in the specification of the base (Aronoff 1976, Baba 1998). Therefore, in accounting for the morphophonological process in this study, we consider a complete word (stem) as the basic underlying form.

Inflection is a common attribute of synthetic languages. It involves addition of affixes to the base form of a word to express grammatical meaning, including tense, person, number, gender, mood, voice, and case (Carstairs-McCarthy 1994:71; Haspelmath 2002:81; Booij 2007:15, and Aronoff and Fudeman 2011:151).

It has been unanimously acknowledged in the linguistic literature that there are two functional classes of affixes: inflectional and derivational (Yule 1996, and Crystal 2008:16). C'lela language has both classes of affixes. The paper establishes that when inflectional affixes such as /kV/ and /t/ are attached to verb stems in C'lela, they trigger certain phonological processes, namely, vowel copying, metathesis, vowel lengthening, vowel deletion, assimilation, and complementary distribution.

The paper is divided as follows: After the introduction, section two presents the Basic C'lela Verb Morphology. Section three examines the phonological issues that are triggered when inflectional affixes come in contact with verb stems in C'lela, while section four concludes the paper.

### **1. Basic C'lela Verb Morphology**

In C'lela, suffixes and prefixes are the inflectional affixes used on the verb to designate tense. The various prefixes (a'-, d', c'-, s'-, m'-, v'-, i'-, u'-,) attach to verb stems to indicate progressive / present tense; the future action is marked also using a prefix /t-/, on the subject pronoun which appears before the verb; whereas the past tense suffix [-kV], is used to indicate a terminative or completed action in the language. Therefore the perfective, the present and the future tenses are morphologically realized from a simple verb stem in C'lela. The descriptions of the C'lela verb morphology exist in Rowbory (2009), Dettweiler (2012) and Aliero (2013). This paper focuses on the perfective suffix [-kV] and the future prefix [t-].

### **2. Phonological Processes in Verb Inflection in C'lela**

As pointed out earlier, the perfective is formed by suffixation of the past tense suffix /-kV/ to verb stems in C'lela. This process of verb inflection often triggers various phonological adjustments in the resulting morphological word. Some of these adjustments include vowel copying, metathesis, vowel lengthening, vowel deletion, and assimilation. While the addition a prefix /t-/, on the subject pronoun which occurs before

the verb, motivates complementary distribution. We discuss each of the six morphophonological alterations below:

### 2.1 Vowel copying in Perfect Formation

A process where certain affixes have vowels that derive their pronunciation from nearby vowels is identified as vowel copying (Stark 2010:53). Vowel copying, which is sometime referred to as vowel harmony, is an archetypical feature of C'lela morphology. It occurs in the language when the perfective suffix */-kV/* is added to the verb stem. This implies that the perfect morpheme */-k/* occurs with any nuclei, the choice of which is probably licensed by the penultimate vowel of the verb stem that precedes it. Thus, Vowel copying in the instances in (1) below, describes the way in which the verbal suffix copies its features from the right-most vowel of the preceding verb stem.

|     | <i>Input</i>    |   | <i>Vowel Copying</i> | <i>Gloss</i>     |
|-----|-----------------|---|----------------------|------------------|
| (1) | a. /bèké + kV/  | → | [bèkéké]             | 'jumped over'    |
|     | b. /hwèrá + kV/ | → | [hwèrákà]            | 'rested/relaxed' |
|     | c. /mega + kV/  | → | [mègàkà]             | 'stored away'    |
|     | d. /kwídí + kV/ | → | [kwídíkì]            | 'bent down'      |
|     | e. /kyòró + kV/ | → | [kyòrókò]            | 'pierced, bored' |

The vowel copying in verb inflection, as observed from the above examples in C'lela, appears to be a common feature in the various sub-branches of Niger-Congo. For instance, in Igbo, vowel copying results from the addition of the past tense marker */-rV/* to certain verb roots (Iloene 2007:188; Mbah and Mbah 2012:110). Consider the following Igbo examples in (2) below:

|     | <b>Igbo</b> |       |          | <i>Perfective</i> | <i>Gloss</i> |
|-----|-------------|-------|----------|-------------------|--------------|
|     | <i>Verb</i> |       |          |                   |              |
| (2) | a.          | dànyè | 'fall'   | dànyè-rè          | 'fell'       |
|     | b.          | kwápù | 'push'   | kwápù-rù          | 'pushed'     |
|     | c.          | kósà  | 'spread' | kósà-rà           | 'spread'     |
|     | d.          | bùzì  | 'carry'  | bùzì-rì           | 'carried'    |

(Iloene 2007:188, Mbah and Mbah 2012:110).

In another instance, in Banda-Linda, an Ubangi language, vowel copying occurs when a reversive suffix attaches to certain verbs stem (Hyman 2007:149), as shown in the examples in (3) below.

|     | <b>Banda</b>      |     |                    | <i>Reversive Form</i> | <i>Gloss</i>           |
|-----|-------------------|-----|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
|     | <i>Linda Verb</i> |     |                    |                       |                        |
| (3) | a.                | vis | 'brood, warm'      | vìr-i                 | 'open, spread (wings)' |
|     | b.                | ze  | 'bubble, overflow' | zer-e                 | 'deflate, sink'        |

(Hyman 2007:149)

Equally, in Lobala, in example (4) when the verb extension suffix is added to the verb root, the final vowel of the stative suffix copies the quality of the root-final vowel. In relation to this process, Morgan (1993:51) argues that such a vowel is an underlying empty nucleus, which is often a copy of the root-final vowel, added to the end of the verbal complex.

|     |    | <b>Lobala</b> |                     |                      |
|-----|----|---------------|---------------------|----------------------|
|     |    | <i>Verb</i>   | <i>Stative Form</i> | <i>Gloss</i>         |
| (4) | a. | wal-a         | wal-aŋgan-a         | ‘fall from a height’ |
|     | b. | wɔl-ɔ         | wɔl-ɔŋgan-ɔ         | ‘be squashed’        |
|     | c. | cɛl-ɛ         | cɛl-ɛŋjɛn-ɛ         | ‘crumble’            |

(Morgan 1993:51)

## 2.2 Metathesis in Verbal Inflection

Metathesis is yet another phonological operation resulting from morphological processes within the C’lela verbal composite. It is a perfect common phonological process (Chomsky and Halle 1968:361), by which the linear ordering of segments reverses position (Hume 2001:1, 2007:2). It also refers to ‘transposition or re-arranging’ of segments mainly of sounds or syllables in a word. Sometimes it involves re-ordering of words in a sentence (Crystal 2008:303 and Buckley 2011:59). It is generally maintained that metathesis occurs in languages so as to have in some way a better formed sequence in the output ordering, usually in the sense of ‘ease of articulation’ or satisfying a language’s phonotactic constraints (Buckley, 2011:60). This applies to C’lela in Verb inflection.

In C’lela verb inflection, stem final-vowel undergoes *metathesis* when the past tense marker /-kV/ attaches to a verb stem, thus; *bàglá* ‘to lock’ + /-kV/ becomes *bágál-kà* ‘locked (door)’. There are two conditions under which metathesis occur within the verbal inflection in C’lela. The two conditions are purely driven by phonological requirements: The first is motivated by the occurrence of liquid/nasal-vowel sequence at the end of verb stem following a perfective suffix, and the second is triggered by the requirement that all perfective verbs that undergo the phrase-medial CV metathesis are those with underlying CVC-CV typical stem shape. This study holds that metathesis applies on verbs of this pattern to satisfy sonority principle and syllable structure conditions in C’lela. This type of metathesis appears to be a unique property to C’lela in the Benue-Congo. Consider these examples in (5):

|     |    | <i>Input</i>  |   | <i>Metathesis</i> | <i>Gloss</i>            |
|-----|----|---------------|---|-------------------|-------------------------|
| (5) | a. | /bàglá + kV/  | → | [bágálkà]         | ‘locked (gate/door)’    |
|     | b. | /kèklé + kV/  | → | [kèkèlkè]         | ‘laughed’               |
|     | c. | /kwírmà + kV/ | → | [kwírámkà]        | ‘subsided/extinguished’ |
|     | d. | /tór mò + kV/ | → | [tóròm kò]        | ‘gulped/swallowed’      |
|     | f. | /róknà + kV/  | → | [ròká nkà]        | ‘became matured’        |
|     | g. | /bákrà + kV/  | → | [báká rkà]        | ‘split (into pieces)’   |

A robust case of adjacent metathesis, somehow analogous to C'lela, is found in Fur, a Nilo-Saharan language. In Fur, this type of metathesis is triggered when a mono-consonantal prefix such as /k-/ 'we' is affixed to certain consonant-initial verbs (Hume and Mielke 2001:141). Consider the Fur metathesis where an underlying CV changes to VC under prefixation in (6):

| <b>Fur</b> |                    |                   |                      |
|------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
|            | <i>Prefixation</i> | <i>Metathesis</i> | <i>Gloss</i>         |
| (6) a.     | k-ba-              | → kab-            | 'we drink'           |
| b.         | k-teer-            | → keter-          | 'we forge'           |
| c.         | k-saar-            | → kasar-          | 'we expose for sale' |
| d.         | k-neen             | → kenen           | 'we bewitch'         |

(Hume and Mielke 2001:141)

Another similar pattern of metathesis is attested in Elmolo, a Kenyan Lowland Cushitic language (Hume 2004:208). In Elmolo, the addition of the plural suffix /-o/ to the nouns beginning with the obstruent stop triggers metathesis (Hume 2004:208) as exemplified in (7) below.

| <b>Elmolo</b> |                 |               |              |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
|               | <i>Singular</i> | <i>Plural</i> | <i>Gloss</i> |
| (7) a.        | tikir           | tirko         | 'catfish'    |
| b.            | deker           | derko         | 'horn'       |
| c.            | mukul           | mulko         | 'iron'       |

(Hume 2004:208)

### 2.3 Vowel Lengthening in Perfective Form

In C'lela, the past tense inflection is sometimes accompanied by vowel lengthening effect, that is, when perfective is formed, the short vowel of monosyllabic verbs is realized as long. One may not be wrong in positing that the process of vowel lengthening as given in (8), as well as in similar environments, may be construed as a process which is motivated by the integrity of the output slots whose syllables' weight is expected to be the same (as containing CVV CV or CVC CV) in the syllable template. Compare the following set of examples in (8) and (9) below:

|        | <i>Input</i> |   | <i>Vowel Lengthening</i> | <i>Gloss</i>             |
|--------|--------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| (8) a. | /hyà + kV/   | → | [hyàaká]                 | 'had denied (statement)' |
| b.     | /pú + kV/    | → | [púukù]                  | 'boiled''                |
| d.     | /tò k+ kV/   | → | [tòokò]                  | 'left/gone'              |
| g.     | /kwà + kV/   | → | [kwàakà]                 | 'hoed up'                |



|     |                |   |         |                           |
|-----|----------------|---|---------|---------------------------|
| (9) | a. /dàa + kV/  | → | [dáakà] | ‘pressed/touched lightly’ |
|     | b. /zòò + kV/  | → | [zòòkà] | ‘forged’                  |
|     | c. /vót + kV/  | → | [vótkò] | ‘scraped’                 |
|     | d. /zòlá + kV/ | → | [zòlká] | ‘bathed’                  |

The vowel lengthening process seems to occur only in isolated languages in the Niger-Congo; however, few evidences for this process could be found in Kainji languages. A similar example to the one in C’lela comes from Cicipu, Kainji language; where in the nominal derivation, the addition of the nominal suffix /-ni/ to verb stem, results in the lengthening of short vowel of the final syllable of the verb. Compare the following examples of vowel lengthening from C’lela in (8) and that of Cicipu McGill (2009:204) in (10):

| <b>Cicipu</b> |                   |              |                |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|
|               | <i>Verb</i>       | <i>Noun</i>  | <i>Gloss</i>   |
| (10)          | a. kó ‘to die’    | ù-kóo-ní     | ‘death’        |
|               | b. ùngó ‘to rise’ | nùu-úngóo-ní | ‘resurrection’ |

(Adapted from McGill: 2009-204)

Another vowel lengthening process akin to C’lela is found in Dagaare, a Gur language (Anttila and Bodomo 2007:5). In Dagaare, combining the plural suffix /-ri/ with the noun stem motivates high vowel lengthening, as can be observed below in (11).

| <b>Dagaare</b> |                 |               |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
|                | <i>Singular</i> | <i>Plural</i> |
| (11)           | a. bì           | bíí-rí        |
|                | b. tì           | tìì-rí        |
|                | c. kù           | kúú-rí        |

(Anttila and Bodomo 2007:5)

## 2.4 Final-Vowel Deletion in Perfective Form

The use of the perfect suffix **-k(V)**, in combination with verb stems in C’lela, results in frequent deletion of the stem final vowel in the word they build up. However, we observe in this study that this final vowel-deletion process applies on condition that the verb stem is not of CVC-CV syllable structure that ends in a liquid/nasal-sequence. Here are examples of final-vowel deletion in perfective from C’lela in (12).

|      | <i>Input</i>   |   | <i>Vowel Deletion</i> | <i>Gloss</i> |
|------|----------------|---|-----------------------|--------------|
| (12) | a. /gàgá + kV/ | → | [gágkà]               | ‘tied’       |
|      | b. /hèné + kV/ | → | [hénkè]               | ‘saw’        |
|      | c. /nama + kV/ | → | [námkà]               | ‘ground’     |

|                 |   |          |                              |
|-----------------|---|----------|------------------------------|
| d. /pàná + kV/  | → | [pánkà]  | ‘threw (a stick)’            |
| e. /sáptà + kV/ | → | [sáptkà] | ‘washed (parts of the body)’ |
| f. /dòogá + kV/ | → | [dòogkà] | ‘came back/returned’         |

This vowel deletion phenomenon appears to be restricted to a few languages in the Niger-Congo family. Some of the occurrences of vowel deletion process somehow similar to C'lela in (12) obtain in Kambari (Stark 2010:51). In Kambari, when two vowels are combined together across morpheme boundaries, the first vowel is deleted, and the second one is realized as in (13). However, the motivation for the vowel deletion from Kambari differs from that of C'lela, in that, the deletion occurs in Kambari only when two vowels are merged in a boundary, which is not the case in C'lela. The following examples illustrate this.

### Kambari

|      |                  |                 |             |               |
|------|------------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|
| (13) | a. /ikebe i le/  | money NCM their | [ikeb-ile]  | ‘their money’ |
|      | b. /urana u və/  | day NCM my      | [uran-uvə]  | ‘my day’      |
|      | c. /ucira u və/  | power NCM my    | [ucir-ovə]  | ‘my power’    |
|      | d. /ulinga u le/ | work NCM their  | [uling-ule] | ‘their work’  |

(Stark 2010:51)

## 2.5 Assimilation in Verb Inflection

Assimilation is referred to as “a change of sound of a consonant or a vowel brought about by the influence of a neighbouring, usually adjacent, consonant or vowel” (Abakah 2012:50). Additionally, Bickel and Nichols (2007:181) observe that assimilatory process is a frequent feature in concatenative morphology, which involves the spreading of phonological features across formative boundaries.

In C'lela, voicing assimilation occurs, when the perfective suffix /-kV/ attaches to the verb stem, whose final syllable contains a velar sound /-gV/. In other words, we can posit that, if the verb stem ends in a voiced velar consonant /gV-/ before a perfective marker, two morphophonological processes apply: vowel deletion and assimilation. In example (14), the perfective formation triggers the deletion of the stem-final vowel, and the subsequent assimilation of the stem-final velar sound to the following homorganic sound which is the perfective suffix /k-/ . This assimilatory process is often common with disyllabic words, as shown in the following examples:

|      | <i>Input</i>   | <i>Perfective</i> |   | <i>Assimilation</i> | <i>Gloss</i> |
|------|----------------|-------------------|---|---------------------|--------------|
| (14) | a. /bùgù + kV/ | bùgkù             | → | bùkkù               | ‘flew’       |
|      | b. /mògò + kV/ | mògkò             | → | mòkkò               | ‘borrowed’   |
|      | c. /sògò + kV/ | sògkò             | → | sòkkò               | ‘inserted’   |
|      | d. /vùgù + kV/ | vùgkù             | → | vùkkù               | ‘uprooted’   |
|      | e. /màgà + kV/ | màgkà             | → | màkkà               | ‘offered’    |
|      | f. /zògà + kV  | zògkà             | → | zòkkà               | ‘packed’     |

A similar assimilatory process, where a segment takes on features from adjacent segments is found in Turkish. For instance, in Turkish, when suffixing the past tense marker *-ti* to the verb stem, the suffix consonant may assimilate in voicing to the preceding consonant, thus, *git-ti* “go-PST” is realized as *gel-di* “come-PST” (Bickel and Nichols 2007:181).

## **2.6 Complementary Distribution of the Future Morphemes [t-] and [-n].**

The future tense category in C’lela refers to events that will occur after the time of utterance. In the expression of future tense, C’lela uses periphrastically a phonologically bound prefix /t-/ on the subject pronoun that typically precedes imperfective verb (Rowbory 2009). This means that, though such a following verb does not bear any future marking, yet the /t-/ prefix combines synthetically with the neighbouring subject pronouns to convey the future inflection. However, where the subject pronoun is consonant-initial, the suffix -n attaches to the subject pronoun to assume the role of the /t-/ prefix as the future marker, and this brings us to the idea of complementary distribution.

Complementary distribution refers to a technique used in the identification of allomorphs based on the notion of distribution. Going by the “Inflectional Parsimony Principle”, two inflections are in complementary distribution when they are functionally identical; where one form selects a given formative to realize a certain morphosyntactic property and that selection prevents the selection of other formatives which realize the same morpheme (Carstairs-McCarthy 1987). Thus, pairs of forms that represent the same meaning or serve the same grammatical function, and which never occur in the same environment in a word are said to be allomorphs of the same morpheme and that they are in complementary distribution (Katamba and Stonham 2006).

This distributional technique may apply to C’lela with the allomorphs /t-/ and /-n/. What this means as noted above is that, where a subject pronoun to which the future morpheme is attached begins with a vowel, it selects the future marking prefix t-, but where the subject pronoun is consonant-initial, the future marking suffix /-n/ applies. Therefore, the future suffix /-n/ may represent the future morpheme /-t/ in a different environment; in which case the two morphemes are allomorphs in complementary distribution. Consider the examples in (15a and b and 16a and b):

- (15) a. t-ú dòogá ́n d’kade bukú  
 FUT-he return to bush tomorrow  
 “he will return to the bush tomorrow”
- b. cá-n dòogá ́n d’kade bukú  
 we-FUT return to bush tomorrow  
 “we will return to the bush tomorrow”

- 
- (16) a.    t-ám      gèné  
           FUT-I    write  
           'I will write
- b.    cá-n      gèné  
           we-FUT write  
           'we will write

### 3. Conclusion

The paper has examined the inflectional patterns in C'lela, focusing mainly on the verb category. The morphophonological processes taking place in verbal inflection were explored. They include: vowel copying, metathesis, vowel lengthening, vowel deletion, assimilation, and complementary distribution. It was revealed that the perfective is morphologically realized from a simple verb stem in the language; while the prefix future marker /t-/ is restricted to occurring on the subject pronouns for the realization of future action. The study has also pointed out the existence of the alternative future marker /-n/ which can equally be suffixed to the subject pronoun to represent the future tense prefix /t-/; a morphophonologically conditioned process identified as complementary distribution.

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### **33. Exploring Polar Syntactic Effects of Verbal Extensions in Basà**

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This work investigates four verbal extensions; two in each set result in two opposite effects of the valency of verbs in the Basà language. It studies the effects of such morphosyntactic operations in the Basà language with special focus on ‘reflexives’ ‘reciprocals’ versus ‘causativization’ and ‘applicativization’. Both sets are characterized by polar syntactic processes of either decreasing or increasing the verb’s valency by one argument vis-à-vis the basic number of arguments, but by the similar morphological processes. In addition to our native intuition as native speakers of the Basà language, data elicited for this work include discourse observation, staged and elicited spoken data from fluent native speakers. The paper argues that affixes attached to the verb root result in either deriving an intransitive verb from a transitive one or a transitive verb from a bi/ditransitive verb, and the process equally increases the verb’s valency deriving either a bitransitive verb from a transitive verb or a transitive verb from an intransitive one. Where the operation increases the verb’s valency, it triggers a transformation of arguments in the derived structure. In this case, the applied arguments displace the inherent ones. This investigation can stimulate further study in other areas of transformations that are either syntactic or morphosyntactic in Basà and can also be replicated in other African and non-African languages.

**Key Words:** *applicativization, Basà, causativization, reciprocal, reflexive, valency and verbal extension*

#### **1. Introduction**

The Basà language is an indigenous language spoken in Kogi, Nasarawa, Benue, Niger states and all the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) councils. Crozier & Blench (1992) and Blench & Williamson (1988) classify Basà as belonging to Proto-Kru, under the sub-phylum Western-Kru.

This paper attempts to describe and analyze two syntactic effects (valency) that result from verbal extensions in Basà with a special focus on ‘reflexives’ and ‘reciprocals’ versus ‘causativization and ‘applicativization’.

No known work has compared these processes in Basà. Imoh (forthcoming) attempts a description of verbal extensions from a different perspective. While the previous work deals with the effects of affixal process which results in valency increase, the present focuses on comparing reflexivization and reciprocity with causativization and applicativization and unfold their syntactic effects. The processes of causativization and applicativization differ from the present work. The former focuses on verbal extensions that increase the valency of the verb. Whereas, the present study focuses on processes that

decrease or increase the verb's valency by one argument in each case vis-à-vis the basic one(s) as a result of similar morphological processes.

The investigation attempts to answer the question, "What are the syntactic effects of verbal extensions in Basà when reflexive, reciprocal, causativization, and applicative operators attach to verb stem?"

This section highlights the problems that are faced by this language that necessitate this investigation. First, many languages of the world are seriously endangered because their native speakers neglect speaking them and most of the languages are neither written nor documented. Basà is threatened by this language threat, gradually resulting in critical endangerment which is one of the major reasons for doing this research.

Furthermore, there is a dearth of information on Basà, especially in areas of morphology and syntax which are basic to the study of language. This study will therefore attempt to fill this gap in the literature.

The Justification for this work hinges on the fact that the morphosyntax of the Basà language has not been properly described. Therefore, studying the Basà language at this level will help to bridge the existing gap and promote it. The descriptive study will add to the existing knowledge in the linguistic literature and create an awareness of how they operate in the Basà language; it will make a meaningful contribution to scholarship and pave a way for other language developers and for learning and teaching the language. Furthermore, the study will also benefit other researchers in the greater understanding of the morphology and the syntax of Basà and unveil the interesting processes underlying their interface or the hybrid of morphology and syntax.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, nothing has been done in this area of the language; therefore, this work serves as the pioneering work and reference point to other investigators.

## **2. Theoretical/Conceptual Issues**

This section reviews related literature with the view to establishing a foundation for the present study, focusing on key areas concerning the subject matter.

Technically, the term 'valence' describes a situation of an atom's bond-forming capacity with its outer shell electrons (Brady, 1982:109). Tesnière (1959) was the linguist who adopted this in linguistics which he refers to the bond formed by syntactic elements which may be formed with each other or another constituent.

The verb is the fundamental element of the sentence that determines valency, that is, by the transitivity or intransitivity of the verb. The concept 'transitive' refers to whether or not a verb requires an object to fill the NP slot in the predicate as its direct object. Any verb that requires a direct object to complete a sentence is a transitive verb; whereas, a verb that requires a direct object as well as an indirect object is bi- or ditransitive. That is, it is doubly transitive. On the other hand, any verb that does not require a direct object is referred to as an intransitive verb. Whaley (1997:199) argues that the valency of a verb is not fixed, "a verb in its basic form will manifest what can be referred to as its core valency", that it can be "manipulated and the morphosyntax of the language can typically increase or decrease valency or realign the grammatical relations of verb's argument." This research

is targeted at investigating both the decrease and increase in the number of argument(s) which is a result of causativization, applicativization, reflexivization and reciprocity in Basà.

Crystal (2008:70) describes ‘causative’ as the phenomenon of a causal relationship between alternative versions of a sentence. He exemplifies this with a pair of sentences such as *the cat killed the mouse* and *the mouse died*. He states that the two sentences are related in that the transitive *kill* can be seen as a causative version of the intransitive *die*, i.e. ‘cause to die’ (the cat caused the mouse to die). He further asserts that some affixes have a causative role, e.g. *-ize* as in *domesticize* (= cause to become domestic). This relationship is clearly established in the morphological structure of some languages (such as Japanese, Turkish), where an affix can systematically distinguish between non-causative and causative uses of a verb.

A causative is an expression, in which an event (the caused event) is depicted as taking place because someone does something or because something happens, i.e., if x hadn’t happened, y wouldn’t have happened. Shibatani (1976) characterizes this phenomenon as a relation between two events such that one occurs at t1 and another at t2, and the occurrence of the second event is wholly dependent on the occurrence of the first event. He further explains that, the dependency of the two events here must be to the extent that it allows the speakers to entertain a counterfactual inference that the caused event would not have happened at the time in question if the causing event had not happened, provided that nothing happened (Shibatani, 1976:1).

Comrie reports that it is a source of great interest, especially because of the important role it plays in the derivational morphology of some languages, and also because of the way its analysis requires complex approach combining syntax, semantics and morphology. In the words of Comrie (1985b:323):

Causative, which is a valency-increasing mechanism, is used to refer to a construction derived from another basic construction. Both the basic construction and the derived construction express the same situation, but the derived one has a different subject and it is the reference of the new subject that brings about the situation described by the basic construction.

To Trask (1993:38), ‘causative’ is a term used to refer to a transitive construction, related to a second simple transitive or intransitive construction from which it differs by the additional presence of an agent NP perceived as the instigator of the action expressed in the simpler construction. Trask cites the following examples where categories (b) are causatives, whereas categories (a) are non-causatives:

- (1) a. Tim smiles a lot  
b. Lisa makes Tim smile a lot
- (2) a. I washed the car  
b. Lisa made me wash the car



Category (a), i.e. (1 and 2), is non-causative, whereas in (b), they are causative because they are made to happen.

Crystal states that some languages like English have affixes which have causative roles. He exemplifies *-ize*, as in *modernize* ('cause to be modern'), and such are established in the morphological structure of such languages to systematically contrast between non-causative and causative use of a verb. For example, the *en-* prefix attached to some nouns and adjectives derives a causative reading (verb) similar to 'make' in (2a); hence, to *enslave* implies 'to make someone a slave' while to *en-large* (b) implies 'to make something large' (Katamba, 1993). This can be further illustrated below:

- (3) a. Bill *en-slaved* the prisoner.  
b. Bill *en-larged* the board.

Causatives fall into three broad divisions on formal grounds. Analytical causatives are syntactic constructions with separate verbs such as *make*. Morphological causatives are created by processes such as affixation by *-en* and *-ify*. Lexical causatives are words like *kill*, *send*, and *feed*, etc. (Shibatani, 1976:1). One basic thing about these categories of causatives is the fact that the feature that an NP is specified in the construction as being the participant responsible for causing (or not causing) a given situation. Our focus in this study is on morphological causatives.

The section in the foregoing reviews the general concept of the concept 'causative' focusing on morphological causatives, and drew data to illustrate the phenomenon. The following section focuses on applicatives.

An applicative is a type of double-object construction in some languages (Crystal, 2008:30). It is a process of promoting an argument, for instance, an instrumental or locative NP to the status of an object as a result of attaching an applicative affix to the verb stem (Matthews, 2007:23). Booij (2007:197) exemplifies this grammatical process in the Atlantic language, Wolof, where an additional benefactive argument is created. Where it appears it has a similar meaning cross-linguistically, its properties may differ syntactically. Both English and Wolof have double object construction with an applied benefactive argument, but only in Wolof can such a benefactive participant be added to a verb as an affix:

(4) English:

- a. I baked a cake.      b. I baked *him* a cake/ I baked a cake *for* him  
c. I ran.                d. \*I ran *him* (i.e. I ran for him) (Pylkkann, 2000:1)

(5) Wolof:

- |           |          |       |       |                             |
|-----------|----------|-------|-------|-----------------------------|
| a. Mungi  | lekk     | ag    | kuddu |                             |
| PRES. 3SG | eat      | with  | spoon | 'He is eating with a spoon' |
| b. Mungi  | Lekke-e  | Kuddu |       |                             |
| PRES. 3SG | eat with | spoon |       | 'He is eating with a spoon' |

- (6) Ni-c-no Paqui – lia  
i-it myself wash – APPL ‘I wash it for myself’ (Booij, 2007:197)

In the foregoing examples, the applicative morpheme that attaches to the verb stem (predicate) is equivalent to a prepositional head complemented with an oblique object as distinguished in (5a) (Comrie, 1985).

Aronoff & Fundeman (2005:195) investigate Kivujo, a dialect of Kichaga and report that applicativization describes a number of different grammatical functions changing phenomena cross-linguistically. It involves the addition of an applicative affix along with a change in function of an oblique (such as locative, instrumental), indirect object or null object. The applied object may be interpreted as *beneficiary*, *maleficiary*, *goal*, *instrumental*, *location* (or *locative*) depending on the language or the particular constructions. Aronoff & Fudeman further exemplify this phenomenon with examples from Bresnan & Moshi (1990:148) as follows:

- (7) a. N- a- a- iy-a k-eiya  
FOC-IS- PR-eat-FV CL7-food  
‘He/she is eating food’
- b N- a- a i-yi –i – a m-ka k-elya  
FOC-IS-PR –eat – APP – FV CL-1-wife CL7-food  
‘He/she is eating food for the benefit of the wife or he/she is eating food to the detriment of the wife (cheating on the wife)’

In the foregoing, the appearance of the additional object is made possible by the addition of the prefix, *-i* to the verb stem. This therefore results in two possible readings or interpretations as shown above. In the first, the wife is considered the beneficiary; in the second a maleficiary, both of which are as a result of the attachment of the applicative affix to the verb root.

Similarly, McPherson (2008:27) reports that in Luganda, the applicative morpheme *-il* plays a variety of roles, all serving to introduce a new argument to the verb. She exemplifies the phenomenon as follows:

- (8) a a – ku – zin il - a  
3SG. S- 2SG.O dance – APP-FV ‘He is dancing for you’
- b. a- zin – il – a mu-nyumba  
3SG.O dance APP-FV 18-house ‘He is dancing in the house’
- c. n- fumb –it – a pate jo  
1SG.S – cook – APP-FV part your ‘I am cooking for your party’
- d. in – mu – gul –il –a eki – tee tei  
1P.S – 3SG.O –buy–APP-FV 7 a dress ‘We are buying her a dress’

In the foregoing, the applicative licenses the benefactive object ‘you’ marked on the verb stem, in (8b). The applicative marks the location of an argument on the verb, (8c) implies motive, namely, ‘for your party’, while in (8d), the applicative licenses the goal. In this case, there are neither prepositions nor case markers in the language that might provide an alternative means. For some languages with applicative constructions, paraphrases of it may be possible (i.e. a preposition may be used to introduce an indirect object (Bresnan & Moshi, 1990:149).

‘Reflexive’ refers to a process where in a construction, the subject and the object relate or refer to the same entity (see Crystal, 2008:408; Lyons, 1969:361). It is an operation where “the agent and the patient are coreferential and can be thought of as occupying a single syntactic function” (Haspelmath & Sims 2012:239). This process involves the action of the verb affecting the same person who performs the action. Mengistu (2000:325) exemplifies the concept in Amharic verbs thus:

(9) at ‘t ‘ə        ‘wash’                      and lac’c                      ‘shave’

The derivative prefix *t(ə)* expresses the action that affects the body parts. He thus suggests that the preferred reading for (9) is that of the reflexive. On the basis of this, he generalizes and defines the concept as “the actions that are normally performed on a body part.” This definition may be associated with some inadequacies with regard to what ‘reflexive’ actually means. For example, *A* may perform an action on the body part of *B* which may never have any reflexive sense, for instance,

(10) Bill injured Jane’s leg.

In (10), the action carried out on *Jane’s* body was by *Bill*, but does not have any reflexive sense; though the action was carried out on the body, but by another person. The definition of Lyons, for the researcher better defines the concept ‘reflexive’, that is, “a reflexive construction is one which the subject and the object refer to the same person or thing” (1969:361).

Haspelmath & Sims (2012) argue that, the reflexive is a valence changing operation where the agent and the patient are co-referential, therefore can be thought of as occupying a single syntactic function. They exemplify this with Eastern American as shown in (11) and the rule given in (12) respectively.

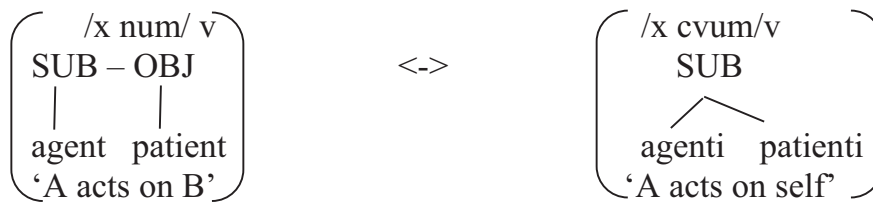
(11)

a. may-ə              iva--um e              Seda -yi -n.  
     mother –ART   wash PRS   AUX   Seda- DAT-ART  
     ‘Mother is washing Seda’

b. Seda –n                      iva –cv              –um e.  
     Seda (NOM)-ART wash–REFL-PRS AUX  
     ‘Seda is washing (herself)’ (Kozinceva, 1981)

They express the rule underlying this construction in (12) thus:

12.



They assert that in the reflexive voice, the meaning of the verb remains the same, but both the agent and patient are coreferential with the same index as shown in the word-schema in (12). In the following, we shall examine another concept of valence-changing operation which is in opposite relation with the forgoing namely, ‘reciprocal’.

In a reciprocal construction, two or more participants are involved and they act on one another. That is, semantically, in this type of construction, the two arguments of the predicate act upon each other. In such a case, the subject is equally the object, or both of them are the same. Mazengia (2012:7) opines that “reciprocals are conceptually similar to reflexives; in both cases, the agent is at same time a patient which in effect results in argument reduction from both semantic and syntactic viewpoints.” Instead of two distinct Agent-Patient relations which would result in four participants, the arguments would be limited to only two, i.e. Agent-Patient as well as the relation. This process consequently reduces the valency of the verb from four arguments to two in appearance (see Mazenga, 2012). Mazenga (2012) illustrates this in Amharic language in (13) below:

- (13) Lemma-(f) nna Almaz tə- mərarr ək’ –u  
 L- CONJ A RCIP-bless REDUP-3PL. PFV  
 ‘Lemma and Almaz blessed each other’

He reports Leslau (1995:469) as saying, any type A or B in Amharic verb may be converted into type C and preceded by *tə-* so as to express reciprocity. In other words, as shown in (13), the operator that converts any type of verb to a reciprocal is the prefix *tə-* attached to the verb stem.

Furthermore, in his comparative study of reciprocal of Amharic and Oromo languages, he reports that the Oromo reciprocal construction is simpler. The morpheme which marks reciprocity, that is *wal* ‘each other’ directly attaches as a prefix to any conjugated transitive verb marked for plurality with no further changes to the verb stem. Example:

- (14) Lemma- fi Almas wal –ejbis –an  
 L- CONJ A RECIP-bless -3PL. PFV  
 ‘Lemma and Almaz blessed each other’

The structure of Amharic contrasts with that of Oromo not only by the reciprocal prefix *tə-*, but also the reduplication of the verb stem.

Mutaka (2000:181) argues that reciprocal suffix modifies the meaning of the verb by adding the idea of reciprocity. “When suffixed to verb roots, the reciprocal suffix indicates that the action inherent in the verb is received by more than one element.” They both function as the goal and the action of the sentence. Mutaka contends that “inherently, transitive verbs become intransitive as the subjects of the verb (agent of the action) also function, at the same time as the objects (goals/recipients of the action). Usually, the subject becomes plural as two (or more) participants in the action are at the same time agents of their own actions and goal/recipient of other’s action.”

The over-generalization opined by Mutaka above may not account for all languages, that is, “inherently transitive verbs become intransitive.” Though the derived reciprocal predicate appears to be intransitive in some languages, it is underlyingly transitive. In English for example:

(15) Bill and Jane love each other.

Example (15) shows that the verb is still transitive, because *each other* is a personal pronoun that refers to *Bill* and *Jane*. For other languages that only employ a reciprocal affix, such an affix in most languages implies third person pronoun which refers to the complex noun phrase (subject) which reciprocates the action implied by the verb. If we try to exemplify (15) in (16) below, the sentence will be incomplete, for example:

(16) \*Bill and Jane love ■

In (16), the sentence is incomplete because it requires an internal argument which serves as the direct object for the predicate to make a complete thought.

Mutaka (2000) illustrates this concept in several African languages as shown below.

(17)

a. Bafut (-nə)

i) Sùù kəŋə Bì

‘Suh loves Bin’

ii) Sùù bó Bì kəŋə

Suh and Bin love+REC

‘Suh and Bin love each other’

b. Akɔɔsɛ (-ɛn (the ɛ deletes in front of a vowel))

i) kòɔ

‘to hate’

kòɔ-n

‘to hate each other’

ii) Senze né ŋɔmɛ bé kɔɔné

‘Senze and Ngome hate each other’



## c. Tuki (-na)

## i) Mbàrá à dínám Pùtá

Mbara he love+IMP Puta

‘Mbara loves Puta’

## ii) Mbàrá nà Puta vá dínànam

Mbara and Puta they love+REC+IMP

‘Mbara and Puta love each other’

In each of the three languages above, an infix operator, which attaches to the verb stem triggers the reciprocal sense in each sentence, implying that the action characterized by the verb stem is reciprocated by the participants.

The preceding discussions have laid the foundation for this investigation. The following sections analyze and compare the two categories of similar morphological processes of verbal extensions and point out the patterns of syntactic transformation in Basà.

### 3. Valency Increasing Extensions in Basà

The extensions discussed in the forgoing, characterized by valency-increase or decrease are attested and very productive in the Basà language. The following sub-sections discuss them beginning with causativization.

#### 3.1 Causativization

Causativization is described as an agent adding operation. When a new participant is added to a verb, the event structure must be enriched as well, “so the causative is clearly an event-changing operation” (Haspelmath & Sims, 2012:241). It means, “to cause or make somebody do something” or “to cause something to become something different” (Mutaka, 2000:177). This process can be exemplified in Basà, thus:

(18)

- a. i. *Gè- Jéere weci*  
 NOM name sleep-PST  
 ‘Jere Jasa to sleep’

- ii. *Gè- Jéere weci-cinji Jasà*  
 NOM name sleep-PST-CAUS name  
 ‘Jere caused/made Jasa to sleep’

- b. i. *Gà- Láshe zhìnje*  
 NOM-name wake-PST  
 ‘Lashe woke up’

- 
- ii. Rùndu ri            zhi-ngìci-njẹ    Láshe  
 noise AGR-S wake-PST-CAUS name  
 'The noise caused/made Lashe wake up'
- c.      i. ọ̀nọ̀ọ    hiẹ̀rẹ̀  
           bird    fly-PST  
           'The bird flew'
- ii. bọ̀jala hiẹ̀rẹ̀-cẹ̀njẹ    ọ̀nọ̀ọ  
              hunter fly-PST-CAUS bird  
              'The hunter caused/made the bird fly'
- d.      i. ihilùè            i            zwi  
           water pot AGR-S drown-PST  
           'The water pot got drowned'
- ii. *Bìyikwo            zu-cinji            ihilwè*  
              lady            drawn-PST-CAUS    pot  
              'The/a lady caused/made the pot to drawn'    (Curled from Imoh, 2013:75)

In the foregoing examples, the attachment of the causative suffix automatically engenders the sub-categorization of an additional argument, where the applied argument serves as the causing agent and subject of the derived structure. Whereas, the inherent subject argument which is now the causee agent is moved to the object position.

In this language, the causative affix has the effect of not only transforming the arguments of the basic structure, but also transitivity a verb to derive a transitive one from an intransitive or derive a ditransitive verb from a transitive one or a verb stem from an adjective, consequently subcategorizing an additional argument in the derived sentence. This can further be illustrated, as follows:

- (19) a. i. Gà- Zúma    ba    sumà mpe  
           NOM-name AGR-S mad madness  
           'Zuma is mad'
- ii. Gè- Swin sọmẹ-cẹ̀njẹ            Zúma mpe  
              NOM-name mad-PST-CAUS name madness  
              'Swin caused/made Zuma mad'
- b.      i. Yèu zhìnjẹ malabọ̀  
           child wake-PST sleep  
           'The child woke-up from sleep'



- |    |                                                                                                  |               |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
|    | Gà Jasà sè-njẹ Làrẹ idikẹ<br>NOM name buy-PST-APPL name shirt<br>'Jasa bought Lare a dress'      | [Applicative] |
| c. | Bọ 'wálò bishi mi<br>Greet father 1SG-POSS<br>'Greet my father'                                  | [Plain]       |
|    | Bọ Ñ 'wálá-gwò bishi mi<br>3SG 1SG greet-APPL father 1SG-POSS<br>'S/he greeted my father for me' | [Applicative] |

In the foregoing, the plain verbs are the simple forms whereas, the inflected ones are the complex forms to which the applicative affix attaches. In each case, the attachment of the benefactive affix triggers an automatic sub-categorization of an additional argument which serves as the applied object, thereby increasing the valent of the derived structure by one argument. We can further discuss more of these operations below.

### 3.2.2 Locative

This type of applicative construction deals with special location in relation to the applied object. This is characterized by two types, both of which express location either *to* as in 'Goal' or *from* as in 'Source'.

Examples:

- |         |                                                                                             |               |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| (21) a. | Kálá igùzhi<br>throw knife<br>'Throw the knife'                                             | [Plain]       |
|         | Bọ kele -ni Jéere igùzhi<br>3SG-S throw-PST-APPL name knife<br>'S/he threw a knife to Jere' | [Applicative] |
| b.      | Gà- zájẹmẹ suri<br>NOM name move-PST<br>'Zajeme advanced'                                   | [Plain]       |
|         | Gà - Zájẹmẹ sule-ni Jasà<br>NOM name move-PST-APPL name<br>'Zajene charged at Jasa'         | [Applicative] |
| c.      | Tú gùùrẹ<br>1PL.S return-PST<br>'We returned'                                               | [Plain]       |

- 
- |    |                                                                |                      |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
|    | Tú      gúlè   -ni      bò                                     | <i>[Applicative]</i> |
|    | 1PL.S   return-PST-APPL 3SG.O                                  |                      |
|    | ‘We returned to him/her’                                       |                      |
| d. | Àà      zháajẹ                                                 | <i>[Plain]</i>       |
|    | 3PL.S   come-PST                                               |                      |
|    | ‘They came’                                                    |                      |
|    | Àà      zhagà-nẹ      bò                                       | <i>[Applicative]</i> |
|    | 3PL.S   come PST-APPL 3SG                                      |                      |
|    | ‘They came from somewhere to her,’                             |                      |
| e. | Bì      Jiye                                                   | <i>[Plain]</i>       |
|    | 3SG.S   return-PST                                             |                      |
|    | ‘She returned’                                                 |                      |
|    | Bì      jiyè- ni      bwòlò ùbwa                               | <i>[Applicative]</i> |
|    | 3SG.S return-PST-APPL husband POSS-3SG.O                       |                      |
|    | ‘She returned from divorce/separation’ (Curled from Imoh 2014) |                      |

### 3.2.3 Maleficiary

This applicative role is received by the object which loses from the performance of a certain action by the subject. The affix could be an infix or suffix depending on the verb root concerned, but whatever form it takes, it performs the same role of maleficiary. Examples:

- (22) a. Bò      bweji      ihilwè      *[Plain]*  
 3SG.S break-PST   water pot  
 ‘He broke the water pot’
- Bò      bwe-de-ji      Làrẹ ihilwè      *[Applicative]*  
 3SG.S break-APPL-PST name water pot  
 ‘S/he broke Lare’s pot’
- b. Bù      huwi      iyimẹyẹ      *[Plain]*  
 3SG.S finish-PST food  
 ‘S/he finished the food’
- Bù huwe-ni      atwamwa iyimẹyẹ      *[Applicative]*  
 3SG.S finish-PST-APPL people   food  
 ‘S/he finished peoples’ food’
- c. Hí      le      uwẹ      *[Plain]*  
 2PL.S get-PST something  
 ‘You got into trouble’



---

|                                                            |              |       |           |               |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------|-----------|---------------|
| Hí                                                         | leshi-gení   | bò    | ùwè       | [Applicative] |
| 2PL.S                                                      | get-PST-APPL | 3SG.O | something |               |
| 'You got into trouble for his/her' (Curled from Imoh 2014) |              |       |           |               |

---

In each of the cases in the foregoing examples, the action is done to the detriment or loss of the applied object. These two verbal extension operations (causativization and applicativization) are characterized by valency-increasing effects, though they are characterized by different syntactic transformations which can be expressed as follows: Causativization implies “to cause” or “to cause something become something different”, it generally has the effect of changing monovalent verbs to a bivalent ones, because the causee, which is resonated by causer argument is included as part of the verb’s valency, occasioned by the causative operator. This effect (of valency increase) is equally characterized by applicatives, but applicatives do not have the effect of “to cause” or “to make somebody do something” as characterized by causatives.

Again, both causatives and applicatives operators have common features of changing intransitive verbs to transitive verbs and transitive verbs to di/bitransitive verbs when they attach to their roots.

Furthermore, these two also contrast in the following ways: causativization is a derivative operation that derives a verb stem from another verb or an adjective root as a result of attaching a causativizing operator. When this happens, the applied object, that is, the cause agent becomes the subject of the derived sentence, positioned before the verb, whereas, the inherent subject moves below the predicate and becomes the causee agent, and the inherent direct object moves right-most, following the inherent agent which now winds up as object. But the applicative suffix is not characterized by this syntactic transformation. It is an inflectional operation. When the applicative suffix applies, the inflected verb stem maintains its lexical class. The inherent subject maintains its base position. The only transformation in this operation is, the applied object shifts the basic object right-most and occupies its position.

The common thing among these two operations is the fact that both of them subcategorize an additional argument and increase the valence of the verb in the derived structure, resulting from similar processes of verbal extensions.

#### **4. Valency Decrease Extensions in Basà**

This section considers a similar operation of attaching an operator to the verb stem, but results in an opposite consequence of reducing the verbal valency.

##### **4.1 Reflexives**

The following section presents the analysis of reflexives in Basà. Each example consists of (a and b) to examine the basic structure and compare it with the morphologically inflected one, to show how the reflexive affix extends the verb stem and syntactically reduce its valence by one argument. If for example, a predicate is characterized by two place argument, (i.e. a transitive verb), the attachment of a reflexive operator to such verb stem reduces its valency by one (intransitive). If on the other hand a verb is bitransitive, the

reflexive inflectional affix reduces it to a transitive verb, where the direct object deletes and the indirect object becomes the direct object of the derived structure. Consider the following examples:

- (23) ai.     $\acute{N}$     swọçẹ umwotù  
           1SG drive-PST car  
           ‘I drove a car’
- ii.     $\acute{N}$     màrà- swọçẹ  
           1SG REFL-drive-PST  
           ‘I drove myself.’
- bi.     $\acute{N}$     shepi Làrẹ  
           1SG take-PST name  
           ‘I took/drove Lare’
- ii.    Gà-Làrẹ    mèmè-shepi  
           NOM name REFL take-PST  
           ‘Lare took/drove herself’
- ci.    Àta    Jasà    na    Zájẹmẹ    bẹjẹ    Zẹyí  
           DET    name CONJ name    feed-PST name  
           ‘Jasa and Zajeme fed Zeyi’
- ii.    Ata    Jasa    na    Zájẹmẹ    à    màrà    -bẹjẹ  
           DET name CONJ name    AGRS    REFL    feed-PST  
           ‘Jasa and Zajeme fed themselves’
- di.    Bọ    shẹrẹ    bọnaà  
           3SG cut/slaughter-PST cow  
           ‘S/he slaughtered a cow’
- ii.    Bọ màrà-shẹrẹ  
           3SG REFL cut/slaughter-PST  
           ‘S/he slaughter him/herself’
- ei.    Gè-Jére    jibi    Swiin  
           NOM-name beat-PST name  
           ‘Jere beat Swin’
- ii.    Gè- Jére    mèmè- jibi  
           NOM-name REFL-beat  
           ‘Jere beat himself’

- 
- fi.    Bú lubi Shien  
      2SG love name  
      ‘You love Shien’
  
  - ii.    Bù mèmè-lubi  
      2SG REFL-love  
      ‘You love yourself’

In each of the examples in (23), the verbs in the basic sentences are characterized by two place arguments, that is, the subject and the object. As soon as the reflexive prefix attaches to the verb stem, it changes the verb from its inherent transitivity to intransitive; hence, in each case in (23), the predicate does not subcategorize an internal argument. That is, this verbal extension has the effect of decreasing the verb’s valency. As such, the valency of the verb is not fixed. This morphosyntactic process manipulates the verb’s valency or realigns the grammatical relations of a verb’s arguments (see Mutaka 1997:199).

There are few verbs that despite this process, they still retain their transitivity, that is, they do not derive intransitive forms from transitive ones even when the reflexive prefix attaches to them. This set can be exemplified below:

- (24) ia.    Bì    jeji        búbwa  
              3SG cut-PST finger  
              ‘S/he cut her/his/self’
- b.    Bù mèmè-jeji    búbwa  
              3SG REFL-cut-PST finger  
              ‘S/he cut her/himself’
- iia.    Ñ    dọṛẹ        mènì  
              1SG bathe-PST water  
              ‘I bathed’
- b.    Ñ    màrà-dọṛẹ        menì  
              1SG REFL-bathe-PST water  
              ‘I bathed myself’

These types of verbs are not as productive as those in (23) and they are not the preoccupation of this paper. The research is interested in those verbs to which the attachment of this operator triggers a decrease in their valency.

There is another operation that behaves morphosyntactically alike as the reflexive. Here, the attachment of an affix also triggers an automatic valency reduction.

## 4.2 Reciprocals

Both reciprocal and reflexive constructions employ the same prefix *màmà-*. This prefix can be modified to form different allomorphs based on the verb root to which it attaches (see 23 & 24). What is responsible for this is progressive assimilation, where the prefix, in anticipation of the phonetic properties of its host, assumes a phonetic shape that shares its phonetic affinity. They (reciprocal and reflexive) contrast simply by the reciprocal receiving an additional affix, namely, a suffix, both of which form a single unit around the verb stem. This process is described as ‘circumfixation’, that is a combination of prefix and suffix treated as a single unit (Matthews, 2007:57). This process can be exemplified, as follows:

- (25) ai. Gà-Jére lubi Shẹ̀ẹ̀n  
 NOM-name love name  
 ‘Jere loves Sheen’
- ii. Gà- Jére na Shẹ̀ẹ̀n mòmò-lubo-nù  
 NOM-name CONJ name REFL-love-RECIP  
 ‘Jere and Sheen love each other’
- iii. Òò mòmò-lubo-nù  
 3PL REFL-love-RECIP  
 ‘They love each other’
- bi. Gà- Zájẹ̀mẹ̀ twajẹ̀ Rẹ̀cé  
 NOM-name insult-PST name  
 ‘Zajeme insulted Rice’
- ii. Gà-Zájẹ̀mẹ̀ na Rẹ̀cé màmà -twaga -nò  
 NOM-name CONJ name REFL-insult-RECIP  
 ‘Zajeme and Rice insulted each other’
- ci. Gà-Jére imi Zẹ̀yínàba  
 NOM-name hate name  
 ‘Jere hates Zeinaba’
- ii. Gà- Jére na Zẹ̀yínaba mòmò-imo-nù  
 NOM-name CONJ name REFL-hate-RECIP  
 ‘Jere and Zeinaba hate each other’
- di. ń zhegeni Hunu  
 1SG visit-PST name  
 ‘I visited Hunu’

- 
- ii. Tú mò-mò- zhogo-nù  
1PL REFL-visit-HAB-PST-RECIP  
'We visited each other'
  
  - ei. Gà-Sheneni swe Zèkè mayagà  
NOM-name drink-PST name wine  
'Sheneni fined/punished Zeke'
  
  - ii. Gà- Sheneni na Zèkè mò-mò-swo-nù mayagà  
NOM-Sheneni CONJ name REFL-drink-PST-RECIP wine  
'Shenenin and Zeke fined/ punished each other'
  
  - iii. Òò mò-mò- swo-nù mayagà  
3PL REFL-drink-PST-RECIP wine  
'They fined each other'

In (25), the process is characterized by valence decrease, when the affix (circumfix) attached to the verb stem. The semantic meanings of the derived sentences in (ii or iii) are that, the actions inherent in the verb stem are mutually received or reciprocated by the same participants. These elements also serve as the agents and patients of the same actions resulting in decreasing the verb's valency by one argument. Reflexives and reciprocals, though have similar syntactic effect of valency decrease, contrast with each other in the following lines:

- i. In a reflexive situation, the action of the verb affects the same person(s) who performs the action, that is "the subject and the object refer to the same person or thing" (Lyons, 1969:361).
- ii. Reciprocity refers to a situation where two parties or participants mutually act upon each other. That is, the action does not go back to the actor or subject, it passes to the patient or direct object of the verb which equally serves as part of the subject.

The morphosyntactic processes are similar. In the former, the action goes to the agent or actor, but in the latter, the action is mutually carried out and the action is mutually received by the agents or participants.

It is noteworthy that in the valency decreasing processes, the prefix *mama-* implies a reflexive sense, whereas, the suffix *-nù* completes the meaning of reciprocity. While the reflexive operator may apply alone, the reciprocal operator *-nù* does not.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper examines two sets of verbal extensions in Basà namely, causativization and applicativization versus reflexivization and reciprocity. Each set is categorized based on



its close syntactic affinity with each other, although, not without some salient distinctions in each set.

Causativization is characterized by the operator *-nje* 'do' (which has several allomorphs, based on the stem). When it attaches to a stem, it derives a causative verb and triggers a syntactic transformation of the basic arguments, where the applied argument displaces the inherent subject and becomes the subject as well as the causer argument and agent, whereas the inherent subject winds up in the object position as the causee argument (second agent), and displaces the inherent object and moves it right-most. The applicative operator *-nje* which has several allomorphs has different applicative roles as discussed in section 4.2. It is equally characterized by valency increase, but not a derivative operation like causativization. The applied argument in this case does not occur at the subject position, rather, below the verb stem and displaces the inherent object and moves it right-most. The syntactic characteristic this set has in common is the fact that both increase the verbal valency by one argument vis-à-vis the basic one(s).

The second set comprises of 'reflexivization' and 'reciprocity'. Both of them are characterized by valency decrease, with some morphosyntactic contrast. For reflexivization, the action of the subject returns to the subject. Hence, in Basà, the object of the basic sentence deletes once the operator attaches to the verb stem. For the reciprocal, both the prefix and the suffix both apply simultaneously, i.e., 'circumfixzation', but the action reciprocally goes to both the subject and the object, such that both the subject and the object are combined together with a conjunction to form a complex subject. The process then deletes the basic object, rendering a transitive verb intransitive.

These two sets are both characterized by verbal extensions. The first one increases the valency of the verb, thereby deriving a more complex structure from a less complex one whereas, the second decreases it and derives a complex less structure from a basic sentence.

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## 34. Negation Marking in Defaka

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Defaka is a grossly endangered language spoken in the shared community of Nkoroo, situated in the Eastern fringe of the Niger Delta Region of Rivers State, Nigeria. The language has less than fifty fluent speakers. This paper discusses the strategies for marking negation in Defaka. In Defaka, negation is basically morphological, with a clause level clitic =**re** attached to the verb. Other markers of negation are, the low toned sentence-final particle **kòm** which is used to mark the unfulfilled negative, the existential negative **jáilè** and the negative imperatives **kírì** and **nìnì**. Tone plays a secondary role in negation marking in Defaka. The characteristic tonal pattern of a negative sentence in Defaka is a falling tone; this pattern does not change even with questions, except in cases where a verb with a final high tone spreads its high tone through the last syllables of an utterance, giving the utterance a final raised intonation pattern. This raised intonation pattern is also attested in the negation of some noun phrases. Double negatives occur only with the imperative.

### **Introduction**

Ndimele (2009:121) observes that the “subject of negation has continued to attract considerable attention from scholars from diverse fields”. He further states that “negation is a distinct speech act from the affirmative, and that negative-affirmative pairing is not always a straightforward one”.

A negative clause is one which asserts that some event, situation, or state of affairs does not hold. We shall discuss negation in Defaka, under two broad strategies: clausal and constituent negation. Clausal negation is that employed in languages to negate an entire proposition, while constituent negation is associated with particular constituents of the clause. In Defaka, the subject, the verb or any other nominal element within the predicate phrase may be negated. If the subject is negated, it may or may not be in focus. However, negation of the predicate phrase or elements within the predicate phrase, always occur in cleft construction.

Clausal negation may entail negation of existence or negation of fact. In the former, a negative adverb **jáilè** ‘not there’ which also functions as a negative quantifier in some nominal constructions occurs, while in the latter, the basic marker of negation is the negative clitic =**re**. Other markers of negation which may occur in clausal or constituent negation are, lexical items expressing such notions as refusal, etc., modal auxiliary verbs, with inherent negative connotations.

### 1. Clausal Negation

Clausal negation is marked with a clause-level clitic, **=re** attached to the verb, playing a major role. The clitic does not occur at all in negation of existence, only the negative adverb does. Compare (1a) and (b).

- 1a)      ì      jáìlè      dzíkà=tè  
           1sg NEGA house =LOC  
           'I am not at home'
- b)        í      à      ééńáà      éè=rè  
           1sg DEF food eat =NEG  
           'I did not eat the food'

Two strategies are employed in clausal negation. Negation of existence, hosts the negative adverbial **jáìlè** 'not there'. **jáìlè** appears to be a formative from a combination of **jáà** 'thing' and **ìlè** 'place'. This morpheme is usually the sole negator in a clause where it occurs.

- 2a)      ì      jáìlè      dzíkà=tè  
           1sg NEGA house =LOC  
           'I am not at home'
- b)        á      jáìlè      à      tèè      ?ùù=tè  
           3sgf NEGA DEF play ground =LOC  
           'She is not at the play ground'
- c)        ní      jáìlè      nùmà dòm=tè  
           3pl NEGA that place =LOC  
           'They are not around or there'

In negation of fact, the clitic negative marker **=re** attaches directly to the verb, knocking off every other tense aspect marker. The tone of the last syllable of the verb to which the negative marker cliticizes is almost always low, especially when the clause has an object. Some verbs with inherent high tones, however, do not follow the rule

In declarative affirmative sentences, the last tone of the verb to which the factitive marker is attached is almost always high, as the examples in (3) show.

- 3a)      ì      à      ééńáà      éé-mà  
           1sg DEF food eat-FACT  
           'I ate the food'
- b)        á      à      máńgòrò kání-mà  
           3sg DEF mango pluck-FACT  
           'She plucked the mango'

- c) wá à átákì ẽwẽ-mà  
1pl DEF money steal-FACT  
'We stole the money'

In the negative forms in (4) below, however, the last tone of the verb to which the negative marker cliticizes is almost always low, as against the final high tones of the verbs in the factitive affirmative in (3). This can be considered as an additional marker of negation, but this is not a consistent pattern, as we observe in (4d and e).

- 4a) ì à éépáà éè=rè  
1sg DEF food eat=NEG  
'I did not eat the food'
- b) á à mángòrò kánì=rè  
3sgf DEF mango pluck=NEG  
'She did not pluck the mango'
- c) wá à átákì éwè=rè  
1pl DEF money steal=NEG  
'We did not steal the money'
- d) á dzíkà òbìò=tè sékí=!ré  
3sgf house inside=LOC dance=NEG  
'she did not dance in the house'
- e) wá à ídò ìjá=!ré  
1pl DEF farm go=NEG  
'We did not go to the farm'

Progression and futurity are expressed in the same way in negative constructions in Defaka. The marked feature here is the occurrence of the low toned future tense marker **kà** which occurs before the negative clitic. Verb stem tones take the form for the future tense, which characteristically has the last tone of the verb low, except a few exceptions with inherent final high tones, like the verb **ìjá** 'go' as in (5a)

- 5a) ì à ídò ìjá-kà=rè  
1sg DEF farm go-FUT=NEG  
'I am not going to the farm'
- b) í dzíkà káramà-kà=rè  
2sg house leave-FUT=NEG  
'You are not leaving the house'



- c) wá ééjǎǎ éè-kà=rè  
 1pl food eat-FUT=NEG  
 'We will not eat food'

The negative habitual aspect, distinguishes the forms with an object NP and those without an object NP, by means of high-low tones in the former and high tones in the later. In the affirmative however, as in (6), the reverse is the case. The forms with an object NP bear high tones while the forms without an object NP bear low tones.

### Affirmative

- |                            |                               |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 6) -obj NP                 | + obj NP                      |
| ò lèlèlèlè-mà              | ò jáà lélélélé-mà             |
| 3sgm sell sell-FACT        | 3sgm something sell sell-FACT |
| 'He sells or used to sell' | 'He used to sell things'      |
| b) à tǔàtǔà-mà             | á jáà túátúá-mà               |
| 3sgf cook cook-FACT        | 3sgf something cook cook-FACT |
| 'She often cooks'          | 'She often cooks something'   |

### Negative

- |                            |                                 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 7) -object NP              | + objectNP                      |
| wá ǎǎǎǎǎǎ=ǎré              | wá sèisèìjǎǎǎǎǎǎ=rè             |
| 1pl kill kill =NEG         | 1pl snake kill kill =NEG        |
| 'We don't normally kill'   | 'We don't normally kill snakes' |
| ní isósó=ǎre               | ní dzíkà isòsò=rè               |
| 3pl come come =NEG         | 3pl house come come             |
| 'They don't normally come' | 'They don't normally come home' |

The tonal pattern of the -object NP negative form is emphatic, while the + object NP form is not emphatic. This raised intonation pattern is also observed in the negation of some noun phrases, especially with the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular pronoun. See Essien, (2013), for a detailed discussion on the tonal pattern of the habitual aspect.

### 1.1 The Unfulfilled Negative

The unfulfilled negative form expresses an action that has not yet been carried out. The clitic negative marker =**re** occurs alongside the low toned unfulfilled negative marker **kòm**, which usually occurs as a free morpheme clause finally. The modal auxiliary verb **m̀bè** 'be able' may optionally occur.

- |                                   |                                              |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 8a) á à ómgbìjǎǎǎ gbǐǐ=rè kòm     | á m̀bè à ómgbìjǎǎǎ gbǐǐ=rè kòm               |
| 3sgf DEF dress sow =NEG yet       | 3sgf MOD DEF dress sow =NEG yet              |
| 'she has not yet sowed the dress' | 'She has not yet been able to sow the dress' |

- |    |                                                                              |                                                                                                |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| b) | ní ísò ílàà=rè kòm<br>3pl come reach =NEG yet<br>'They have not arrived yet' | ní mbè ísò ílàà=rè kòm<br>3pl MOD come reach =NEG yet<br>'They have not been able to come yet' |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### 1.1.2 The NegativeUnfulfilled Future

The negative unfulfilled future occurs only in conditional clauses. The subordinate clause hosts the verbs **múmá** 'finish' and **sò** the desiderative, and the modal auxiliary verb **mbéke** as the case may be.

- 9a) í sò jáà súkù múmá-mà kéídèi ì sò éé-mà mbè ílàà=rè kòm  
2sg DES thing wash finish-FACT time 1sg DES eat-FACT MOD reach =NEG yet  
'I would not have eaten, by the time you would have finished washing'
- b) í mbékè ísò-kà ì tùà múmá=!rè kòm mà kàà  
2sg MOD come-FUT 1sg cook finish =NEG yet that manner  
'I would not have finished cooking but you can come still'.

## 1.2 Negating Complex Sentences

There are no special strategies for negating serial verb constructions and consecutive constructions. The entire construction is negated only once.

- 10a) kírí à ògĩǒ tà ísò nìní  
NEG DEF Knife SER come NEG (imperative)  
'Don't bring the knife' [lit, Don't take knife and come]
- b) àmàjà átákí tà wíé á ámà=rè  
PN money SER keep 3sgf give =NEG  
'Amanya did not keep money for her'  
[lit Amanya did not take money and keep for her]
- c) tàbìòmbé kúmájàà sònó òrì tàà ámà=rè  
PN wrapper buy his wife give =NEG  
'Tabiombe did not buy wrapper for his wife'

Negation is marked only once in consecutive constructions as well. The consecutive construction has a verbal particle **ke** which functions as a connective. **ke** is however, omitted if there is a different subject for the consecutive, as in (11c):

- 11a) ò ì èvè kè ńgíè=rè  
3sgm 1sg hit CONN run =NEG  
'He did not hit me and ran'

- b) á dzíkà ìjá kè jáà éè=rè  
3sgf house go CONN thing eat =NEG  
'She did not go home and ate'
- c) ì òkùnà ééjààn éè=rè bómà àkìdì éé-mà  
1sg fowl food eat =NEG PN beans eat-FACT  
'I did not eat rice, while Boma ate beans.'

In coordinate sentences and embedded clauses as in (12d), negation may occur once or twice depending on the kind of construction.

- 12a) ì éé-kà=rè ì èdžè-kà=rè  
1sg eat-FUT=NEG 1sg die-FUT=NEG  
'I will not eat and I will not die'
- b) ì fàà-kà ì kùtálá kée -kà=rè mà kàà góò kè  
1sg say-FUT 1sg lie cut-FUT=NEG that manner reason COMP  
'I will say it because I will not tell a lie'
- c) ì jáà túà-kà=rè í ísò=rè nè  
1sg thing cook-FUT=NEG 1sg come =NEG COND  
'I will not cook until you come. [lit I will not cook if you don't come]
- d) bómà džírí-mà ìbòbái á éè=rè  
PN know-FACT PN 3sgf se =NEG  
'Boma knows that Ibobai did not see her'

## 2. Constituent Negation

### 2.1 Negating Sentences with predicate nominals

No special strategies are employed in the negation of sentences with predicate nominals. Sentences with predicate nominals typically express a defining or identification relationship. The subject of the sentence is usually a noun or a pronoun or sometimes an infinitive phrase, while the complement could be a noun, an adjective, a post positional phrase or a focus construction. There are no morphologically overt copulative verbs in Defaka. What appears like copulative verbs are the toneless subject focus marker, **kə**, and the clitic auxiliary verb, **=ri**. The former is clearly not a verb but a subject focus marker as shown in (13). **=ri** on the hand, is an auxiliary verb which performs aspectual functions in combination with the factitive and perfective suffixes, to mark present progressive and present perfect aspects respectively. **=ri**, by virtue of its syntactic and semantic features could be considered to be functioning as a copulative when it occurs in copular sentences with post positional phrase complements, as in (14). Other forms of copular constructions are expressed by juxtaposition as shown in (15).

- 13a) ò=kò      tàbiòmbé  
3sgm =FOC PN  
'He is Tabiombe'
- b) ò=kò      tàbiòmbé=!ré  
3sgm=FOC PN =NEG  
'He is not Tabiombe'
- 14a) à      ɓáí=!rí      kàsì tòò=tè      déi-mà  
DEF man =PROG chair top =LOC stand-FACT  
'The man is standing on the chair'
- b) à      ɓáí=!rí      kàsì tòò=tè déi=rè  
DEF man =PROG mat top =LOC sleep =NEG  
'The man is not sleeping on the mat'
- 15a) ì      ɔ̀mgbìṇàà      gbíí      ɓáí=!ré  
1sg dress      sew      man =NEG  
'I am not a tailor'
- b) ò      ìbò=rè      kòm  
3sgm big =NEG yet  
'He is not big yet'
- c) ò      m̀bè      ìbò=rè kòm  
3sg MOD big =NEG yet  
'He has not become big yet'

## 2.2 Imperatives

The negative imperative hosts two morphemes **kírí** and **nìni**. **nìni** is obligatory while **kírí** is optional. **kírí** is basically a negative intensifier. The tones of the negative imperative morphemes are invariant. To give a counter command to an action that had begun or completed prior to the moment of speaking, a free morpheme **ɓà** immediately follows **kírí** as in (16c and d)

- 16a) kírí      kètè      nìni  
IMPV laugh IMPV  
'Don't laugh'
- b) ì      fàà      á      áamá-mà      á      ísò nìni  
1sg say 3sgf give-FACT 3sgf come IMPV  
'I told her that she should not come'

- c)    í    fàà    á    á-mà    á    kírí    bá    á-úá    tùà    nìní  
 1sg say 3sgf give-FACT 3sgf IMPN again soup cook IMPN  
 'I told her not to cook soup again'
- d)    kírí    bá    jàkì    éé-áà    èè    nìní  
 IMPN again another food eat IMPN  
 'Don't eat another food again'

### 2.3 Negative Questions

Two basic types of questions are commonly negated. Yes-no questions and echo questions. A third type could be termed emphatic.

A yes-no question refers to an interrogative clause for which the expected answer is either "yes" or "no". The characteristic tonal pattern of a negative sentence in Defaka is a falling tone on the last syllable of the verb to which the negation marker is attached, except in a few cases where a verb has an inherent final high tone. This pattern does not change in yes-no questions as well. A verb with a final high tone spreads its high tone through the last syllables of the utterance, giving the utterance a final raised intonation pattern, as in (17a and b), while elsewhere, verb stems take on the characteristic falling tone of negative sentences, but not without global raising through the entire utterance.

- 17a)    à-mà-nà    óm    ò-biò    è-kè-kè-é-!ré  
 PN        body inside equal NEG  
 'Is Amanyà not well?'
- b)    à-mà-nà    m-bè    à    k-íá    ì-já-!ré    k-óm  
 PN        not able DEF market go =NEG yet  
 'Has Amanyà not gone to the market yet?'
- c)    í    m-bè    à    á-úá    tú-à-rè    k-òm↗  
 2sg not able DEF soup cook =NEG yet  
 'You have not yet cooked the soup?'
- d)    ò-m-ò-m-ò=tè    á    m-bè    à    ò-b-ó-ì-nà    j-á-à-rè    k-òm↗  
 now =LOC 3sgf not able DEF thatch do =NEG yet  
 'So she still has not yet done the thatch?'

Echo questions are questions that are asked to seek clarification on a command or assertion made by a previous speaker. They are expressed with the negative imperative marker.

- 18a)    ì    kírí    dz-írí    dz-íkà    ì-já    n-ì-ì↗  
 1sg IMPN book house go IMPN  
 'Shouldn't I go to school?'

- b) á kírí bá ì ómgbìjà gbĩ̀ -kà=rè↗  
 3sgf IMPN again 1sg dress sew-FUT=NEG  
 ‘Is she not going to sew my dress again?’
- c) á bá lùà óó nìní↗  
 3sgf again cry cry IMPN  
 ‘Should she not cry again?’

The negative emphatic question is inherently a cleft construction. It expresses concern over an unpleasant situation which directly or indirectly affects the speaker. One significant feature of this question type is the fact that, the negative morpheme immediately follows the subject of the sentence and bears a high tone if the tone of the subject is low and a down-stepped high tone if the tone of the subject is high. It does not behave like typical clitics in the language. (note that clitics in Defaka bear low tones when they follow a host with a final low tone, and a down-stepped high tone, when they follow a host with a final high tone). This raised intonation pattern expresses emphasis.

- 19a) ì èsè ísò-mà ì=ré ísò à áruá túà-mà kè  
 1sg see come-FACT REL 1sg NEG come DEF soup cook-FACT COMP  
 ‘I hope that, I am not the one to cook the soup?’
- b) ì èsè ísò-mà bòmá=!ré à bòm pìní kè  
 1sg see come-FACT REL PN NEG DEF child flog COMP  
 ‘I hope that, Boma is not the one that beat the child?’

## 2.4 Focus and Negation

### 2.4.1 Negative Argument Focus

There are no special strategies used for negative focus construction. The markers of negation are the same as in other negative constructions. Verb stem tones are not altered. The subject NP can be a noun or a pronoun.

- 20a) ì=ré jáà kè  
 1sg NEG REL do COMP  
 ‘It is not I who did it’
- b) á=!kó m̀birà jáà lèlè=rè -mà kè  
 3sgf=SFOC REL refused thing sell=NEG-FACT COMP  
 ‘SHE is the one who has refused to trade’
- c) bòmá=!kó m̀bè fàà lèlè-ma=rè kòm  
 PN=SFOC REL MOD say out-FACT=NEG yet  
 ‘It is BOMA who has not been able to speak out yet’



- d) í=!kó íjá-kà=rè –mà kè  
 2sg =SFOC REL go-FUT =NEG-FACT COMP  
 ‘It is YOU who should not go’

Non-subject argument focus hosts the non-subject focus marker òdò. The focused nominal is preposed to sentence initial position immediately followed by the focus marker.

- 21a) bómá òdòééjàà íjá-kà=rè  
 PN fishing go-FUT=NEG  
 ‘Boma is not going fishing’
- òdòééjàà òdò bómá íjá-kà=rè-ma kè  
 fishing NSFOC REL PN go-FUT=NEG-FACT COMP  
 ‘It is FISHING that Boma is not going to’
- b) tàbíòmbe òdòíjà jáà-kà=rè  
 PN thatch do-FUT=NEG  
 ‘Tabiombe is not making thatch’
- òdòíjà òdò tàbíòmbe jáà-kà=ré kè  
 thatch NSFOC REL PN do =NEG COMP  
 ‘It is THATCH that Tabiombe is not making’

#### 2.4.2 Negative predicate focusing

In negative predicate focusing, as in negative argument focusing, the verb is preposed to sentence initial position. The negative predicate focus sentence is inherently cleftivized.

- 22a) jáà gbí=rè á jáà jáà kè  
 thing sew =NEG REL 3sgf do do COMP  
 ‘It is NOT SEWING that she does’
- b) sékí=!ré á jáà jáà kè  
 dance =NEG REL 3sgf do do COMP  
 ‘It is NOT DANCING that she does’

#### Conclusion

The above data and discussion clearly reveal that negation in Defaka is basically morphological with tone playing a subordinate role. As noted by Payne (1997) and Shopen (1985), languages that exhibit morphological negation, associate the negative morpheme with the verb. This is the case with Defaka. The negative morpheme is considered a clitic due to its mobile nature and its tonal behavior, which is in consonance with the tonal behaviour of clitics in the language.

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**Abbreviations and Conventions**


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|       |                                           |
|-------|-------------------------------------------|
| !     | = phonetic representation of downstep     |
| -     | = morpheme break                          |
| =     | = clitic break                            |
| ↗     | = global raise                            |
| 1sg   | = first person singular pronoun           |
| 2sg   | = second person singular pronoun          |
| 3sgf  | = third person singular feminine pronoun  |
| 3sgm  | = third person singular masculine pronoun |
| 3nt   | = third person neuter pronoun             |
| 1pl   | = first person plural pronoun             |
| 2pl   | = second person plural pronoun            |
| 3pl   | = third person plural pronoun             |
| FACT  | = factitive                               |
| NEG   | = negative                                |
| DEF   | = definite                                |
| LOC   | = locative                                |
| PN    | = personal name                           |
| FUT   | = future                                  |
| PF    | = perfective                              |
| DES   | = desiderative                            |
| PROG  | = progressive                             |
| PRE   | = present                                 |
| REL   | = relative                                |
| SER   | = serializer                              |
| MOD   | = modal auxiliary verb                    |
| COMPL | = complimentizer                          |
| NEGA  | = negative adverb                         |
| SFOC  | = subject focus marker                    |
| NSFOC | = non-subject focus marker                |

## **35. Phonological Neutralisation among Nigerian Users of English**

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The phonation practice among many Nigerian users of English reveals a communicative attempt in which there appears to be no phonological distinction between words that have obvious orthographic differences and/or belonging to unrelated classes in actual phonological realizations. The writer's motivation for this work stems from the growing habit even among the learners of English in marking the difference. The purpose of this paper is to account for the loss of such phonological markings or distinction by a category of Nigerian users of English. The writer thus listened to the oral performance of a number of his undergraduate English students and found out that there exist no perceptual differences in the pronunciation of some words that have both orthographic and phonological divergence. The finding is that the mother tongue influence as well as improper teaching and learning of the language coupled with lack of one-to-one phonetic alphabet in the native and the target language are responsible for the phonological neutralisation among such speakers of English. Our methodology is a comparative transcription of identified occurrence of such words juxtaposed with their un-English realization in actual speech.

### **1. Introduction**

English is English only when it is spoken as a time-stressed language or something that presents no difficulty in achieving fidelity of communication, whether by a native speaker or a non-native speaker. However, the phonation practice among many Nigerian users of English reveals a communicative attempt in which there appears to be no phonological distinction between words that have obvious orthographic differences and/or belonging to unrelated classes in actual phonological realizations. The quest for proficiency in English in its Nigerian second language situation seems more threatened if one considers the oral performance of a number of the under-graduate students of the English and allied studies and finds out that there exist no perceptual differences in the pronunciation of some words that have both orthographic and phonological divergence as in the speech of their counterparts in non-English related courses.

In language use, it is easier for a learner of a second language to hide his first language identity or nationality in the written medium than in the oral communication performance. This is because it is impossible for a learner of a second language, e.g. English, to attempt speaking for at least five minutes in a connected spontaneous speech event without defining undoubtedly his level of relationship with the language. There is however a rule of exception; especially if the user in question has:

- acquired the language as his first language;
- had a prolonged interaction with the native speakers of English in different linguistic fields to allow for a native-like proficiency;
- progressed in his study in the language beyond the level of ordinary attempt, and

- when the individual is thought of by another non-native speaker of the same target language as a proficient user of the pseudo language; a performance ability of the individual that a native speaker cannot accept as meeting the communicative need in a discussion.

### 1.1 The Intra-lingual Weakness of English Language

No language is as confusing as English. For instance, if one overcomes the puzzle of grammaticality, that of lexis awaits one; and if one scales that huddle, the unbeatable phonological challenge, graphological and semantic negotiation stare at one in the face. Apart from the grammatical signal of capitalization, how can a school child in Ghana reconcile the lexical variance that is the name of his tribe denotes a female goat in English yet the two words spelt alike have a radically unagreeable pronunciation and phonetic realization?

1. Ewe /ewe/ (with each of the phonemes enunciated).
2. ewe /ju:/

The following two words represent another set of interesting manifest identity of the English language. For example, the diagraph 'ue' has an orthographic value but is a quite redundant item at another point of the analysis as it has no phonological value where it appeared.

- a. cheque /ʃek/
- b. value /valju:/

The phonetic representation of some English words is not only misleading but crazy. For instance, it is not strange to find two words with obvious overt differences in phonemic forms realized in the same phonetic rendition. Example,

- Ewe /ju:/
- You /ju:/

There are certain words where there exist some differences in orthographic representation but the realization in phonemic scripts are the same. What then is the essence of the orthographic variance when the phonological realizations are the same? This is quite unthinkable especially when we are made to know that the two words belong to different word classes apart from their non-asymmetrical spellings (i.e. orthographic appearances).

- 1) a. four /fɔ:(r)/  
b. fore /fɔ:(r)/
- 2) a. throne /θrəun/  
b. thrown /θrəun/
- 3) a. plain /pleɪn/  
b. plane /pleɪn/

- 
- 4) a. you /ju:/  
b. ewe/ju:/
- 5) a. check /ʃɛk/  
b. cheque / ʃɛk/
- 6) a. write /raɪt/  
b. right /raɪt/
- 7) a. whole /həʊ/  
b. hole / həʊ/  
c. hoe /həʊ/
- 8) a. him /hɪm/  
b. hymn /hɪm/

## 2. English Language and the Nigerian Speaker

According to Onah (2013:51), English Language has been with us in Nigeria now for the past one hundred and sixty-five years. Despite the availability of useful text books and instructional aids for teaching and learning the language, not many Nigerians (even the highly educated ones) speak or write the standard variety of it. The question that needed to be answered now is why should a language that has enjoyed dual unequalled official preferences for nearly seventeen decades (first as the medium of instruction and secondly as a subject of study at all levels of education) in a multi-lingual and plural-cultural society fail to produce proficient users? Should we say it is a pedagogical failure or a sociolinguistic factor or both?

This observation is quite revealing especially when the educated generally are equally guilty just as those who picked up the language informally. The big question now is: how can we justify or excuse out the weak communicative attempts of even those that are taking a specialist study in English?

A bad syntactic structure cannot be hid under the cloaks of good pronunciation. In the same way, the habit of using “high sounding word” does not give any force to weak and ungrammatical sentences. Mention must be made that the choice of specialized registers cannot produce any communicative or illocutionary effects unless the following conditions are properly set in place:

- communicative purpose must be defined
- audience must be defined
- sentences must be crafted well and varied in each paragraph
- appropriate use of punctuation marks that can give strength to the sentences must be negotiated.

English has an unparallel status and functional definition in Nigeria compared to any of the indigenous languages or all put together. For instance, it is the language of the parliament, education, judiciary, media, commerce and industry, etc., and above all,



English is the window through which Nigeria services international relations (Awonusi, 2009:80; Banjo, 1996:66 and Jowitt, 1991:18).

In spite of the importance of English to the nation, the language has suffered mishandling and much loss of protection in maintenance of the entrenched standard variety (Adeniran, 1990:22). For instance, in a number of schools (primary and secondary alike), a graduate whose spoken English sounds correct in the ear of even a non-graduate in English can be assigned the responsibility of teaching English language (Azikiwe, 2007:60; Maduekwe, 2007:44).

English has not only been domesticated in Nigeria it has been stripped of its native identities in areas such as phonology, vocabulary syntax and semantic range. The sociolinguistic dimension for reviewing English now has stretched its pristine form to dialectal variations in Nigeria hence we talk of EngliHausa, EngliIgbo and EngliYoruba; and that is not the practice in other West African countries (Odumuh, 1987:v).

In spite of the unusual prominence that English occupies in Nigeria, the Nigerian standard variety especially the written usage is not too popular even among the English language examiners for the SSCE examination bodies i.e. the WAEC and NECO. For example, there are known expressing that can be described as Nigerian clichés, phrasal verb construction, etc., that these examiners consider as violation of the norm. Is it not contradictory that the Marking Scheme of WAEC and NECO English examinations do recommend that the American usage (syntax, vocabulary and/or graphemes) can be accepted; if consistency is maintained (Onah, 2010: 9-10).

The inevitable question that is begging for answer is: Why should the American usage be recommended or protected whereas the popular Nigerian variety is treated as though it is a non-standard variety?

## **2.1 The Place of Phonology in Defining Meaning**

The web of sociolinguistic curiosity is an active one. For instance, every utterance (or written form) in communicative attempt that strikes the ears of the hearer or violates his accustomed knowledge of pronunciation, lexical stocks, syntactic structures and/or the semantic range in the language calls for a careful attention or consideration. For instance, the following variants are a few examples of characteristic phonological and lexical divergent Nigerian usages.

|         |   |                                                                                   |
|---------|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| “think” | { | “tink” when realized as unaspirated<br>“sink” faulty realization of the aspirated |
|---------|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|          |   |                                                                                                                                               |
|----------|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| “In fac” | { | “In fact” = A failed realization of the consonant clusters which<br>in the first place are not in complementary distribution<br>phonemically. |
|----------|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Not many Nigerian users know the difference between “Mister” and “Messer” that the former is the customary title used before the name of more than one man or in names of companies named for a person. This is in case of imperfect learning or wrong assumption of the perceived pronunciation by fake idolized model speakers of English and/or a failed habit of not checking up the correct spelling of a word in dictionary.

Just as a faulty syntactical order affects an intended meaning of a sentence or an utterance, a failed realisation of mutually intelligible pronunciation will impede understanding of what a speaker attempts to communicate. Consider the following two sentences; each exemplifying the danger of wrong word order and a problematic pronunciation, respectively.

- Was fed the dog each day twice.
- Avreviation is a type of slang on its own.

However, a choice to obey the syntactic rule of English will erase the structurally imposed difficulty in accessing the meaning of the same seemingly nonsensical sentence. Example:

- The dog was fed twice each day.

In the same way, if the wrongly elisized bilabial plosive sound /b/ is brought in it double orthographic effect to replace the labio-dental fricative /v/, the distorted meaning of the utterance will emerge involuntarily; e.g.

- Abbreviation is a type of slang on its own.

### 3. Phonological Neutralisation

In English, the contrast between aspirated (voiceless) and unaspirated (voiced) plosive is normally crucial. This is because English being a time-stressed language depends heavily of the phonological markers to express ideas without necessarily providing grounds for misunderstanding in the communicative attempts. Besides, one shared characteristic of both tonal and time-stressed languages (of which English not an exception) is that no two words are the same; though there may exist some semblance either as homophones or as synonyms but such words are never the same at the level of semantics. Therefore, a problem of comprehending the intended meaning, misunderstanding or misinterpretation or outright failure in communication will arise when the expected distinction markers in words are not observed. One of the ways of marking the phonological distinction is neutralisation of phonemes.

Hartmann and Stork (1972:151) defines neutralization as the cancelling of a phonemic opposition in certain positions. They cited examples in German where voiced consonants do not occur at the end of words and so the opposition which exists between pairs of voiced and voiceless consonants is neutralized in the final position. In other words, [p] and [b] can both occur at the beginning in words *paar* [pa:R] 'pair', *Bar* [ba:R] 'bar', but only [p] occurs at the end of words, e.g. *gelb* [gelp] 'yellow'. The Nigerian users of English do not really cancel a phonemic opposition but rather they pronounce words differently as though they were variants.

Richard, Platt and Platt (1992:245) defined neutralisation as "the process which takes place when two distinctive sounds (phonemes) in a language are no longer distinctive (i.e. in contrast)". According to them, this usually occurs in particular positions in a word. One strong reason why we may not agree with the above definition

is the conviction that the Nigerian user of English, in the first place, do not know much about the distinction that exist between words that are treated as variants.

Crystal (1980:232) refers to neutralisation as “a term used in PHONOLOGY to describe what happens when the distinction between two PHONEMES is lost in a particular ENVIRONMENTS”. Osisanwo (2012:220) corroborates this point when he writes that two phonemic sounds are in opposition to each other in the relationship in all contexts. Gussenhoven and Jacobs (2005:54) describe neutralisation as “the rule of DEVOICING that devoices /z/ of the English plural suffix to /s/ after voiceless obstruents, as when /kæt-z/ is changed to /kæts/”.

#### 4. Data Presentation and Discussion

In quantitative study of speech, possible variants or alternatives are usually known ahead of time so that the researcher would document accurately his observation of the variable that is much favoured in the speech sample of the research subjects. Hudson (1996:146) opines, thus:

Investigators focus on a predetermined list of LINGUISTIC VARIABLE – elements which are know in advance to have different realisations, such as words which have more than one pronunciation (house with or without [h], either starting with [i:] or with [ai] and so on). For each variable there is a list of its VARIANTS – the alternative form know to be used – and the investigator goes through a collection of data noting which variants were used for each variable in the list.

In the table below, we have some illustrative sentences that are written against the word and their variants both in orthographic and phonological realisation (pronunciation and transcription) that a number of Nigerian users of English have not neutralised. These include the following:

| S/N | Word                            | Transcription     | Illustrative Sentences and Analysis                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | a. <b>bet</b><br>b. birth       | /bet/<br>/ bɜ:θ/  | His wife gave <b>birth</b> to a baby girl last week Wednesday<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The front close-mid vowel is used instead of long central vowel. Secondly, the alveolar plosive in place of dental fricative.</i></li> </ul> |
| 2.  | a. hour<br>b. <b>our</b>        | /auə/<br>/a:(r)/  | The supplier has waited for you over three <b>hours</b> now.<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>There is an interchange of a diphthongal sound for a long back vowel.</i></li> </ul>                                                          |
| 3.  | a. channel<br>b. <b>charnel</b> | /ʃænl/<br>/ʃɑ:nl/ | The Christian telecast shows on <b>channel</b> 32 every Sunday at 8:30 PM.<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>This is a case of short front vowel replaced with a long back vowel.</i></li> </ul>                                             |

|     |                                          |                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.  | a. <b>course</b><br>b. curse<br>c. cause | /kɔ:s/<br>/kɜ:s/<br>/kɔ:z/    | <p>The <b>cause</b> of his death has not been determined yet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Roach's definition cited in this paper on page 14, however, explains the illustrative sentences.</i></li> </ul>                                           |
| 5.  | a. death<br>b. debt                      | /deθ/<br>/det/                | <p><b>Death</b> rate in this year is higher than last year because of the insurgent attacks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Again we have another interchange of alveolar plosive for dental fricative.</i></li> </ul>                                 |
| 6.  | a. <b>forty</b><br>b. faulty             | /fɔ:ti or fɔ:rti/<br>/fɔ:lti/ | <p>Abineku was not able to attend the conference because of his <b>faulty</b> vehicle.</p>                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 7.  | a. <b>finer</b><br>b. final              | /famə/<br>/faml/              | <p>We all felt disappointed in the team when the centre Referee blew the <b>final</b> whistle to end the match</p>                                                                                                                                                      |
| 8.  | a. forfeit<br>b. <b>four feet</b>        | /fɔ:fit/<br>/fɔ:(r)fɪ:t/      | <p>I have to <b>forfeit</b> my portion so that she could get something for her starving children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The problem here is a multiple one; ranging from word classes to compounding and phonological mismatch.</i></li> </ul> |
| 9.  | a. <b>thus</b><br>b. does                | /ðʌs/<br>/dʌz/                | <p>What <b>does</b> that supposed to mean, you idiot?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A dental fricative is interchanged with alveolar plosive.</i></li> </ul>                                                                                          |
| 10. | a. <b>spam</b><br>b. sperm               | /spæm/<br>/spɜ:m/             | <p>The man was said to have low-<b>sperm</b> count why then is the wife pregnant?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>This is a case of outright exchange of front short vowel for long central vowel.</i></li> </ul>                                       |
| 11. | a. <b>spoon</b><br>b. spurn              | /spu:n/<br>/spɜ:n/            | <p>Felicia, the princess, <b>spurned</b> the marital proposal again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In this sentence, a long back vowel was used to neutralise a long central vowel.</i></li> </ul>                                                    |
| 12. | a. <b>turn</b><br>b. thorn               | /tɜ:n/<br>/θɔ:n/              | <p>The Governor's wife is indeed a <b>thorn</b> in her husband's flesh.</p> <p>The Nigerian user of English will rather articulate /ðɔ:n/ instead of the unaspirated dental fricative/θ/.</p>                                                                           |

|     |                                            |                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 13. | a. flock<br>b. <b>flux</b>                 | /flɒk/<br>/flʌks/               | Birds of a (the same) feather <b>flock</b> together.<br>• <i>This is an instance of a central vowel used in place to back vowel.</i>                                                                                                                 |
| 14. | a. length<br>b. <b>lent</b>                | /lenθ/<br>/lent/                | One of the gifts he received at his wedding was a trouser <b>length</b> .<br>• <i>The nasal velar sound is replaced with alveolar nasal apart from the interchange of alveolar plosive for the dental fricative.</i>                                 |
| 15. | a. order<br>b. <b>other</b>                | /ɔ:də/<br>/ʌðə/                 | You need to see how the wife of the Chief of Army Staff dishes out <b>orders</b> to her shop-keeper as though she is the one wearing the rank of her husband                                                                                         |
| 16. | a. <b>shepherd</b>                         | /ʃefəd/                         | The pastor preached so well as if he is really a shepherd to the church under him<br>• A Nigerian learner of English would realise the same word as / <b>ʃefa:d</b> /; <i>an instance of a long back vowel substituted with short central vowel.</i> |
| 17. | a. martyr<br>b. <b>matter</b><br>c. Martha | /ma:tə(r)/<br>/mætə/<br>/ma:θə/ | God has helped the southern Nigerian Churches in the past few years that we have not had <b>martyrs</b> in the country.<br><i>A case of alveolar plosive used instead of unaspirated dental fricative.</i>                                           |
| 18. | a. three<br>b. <b>tree</b>                 | /θri:/<br>/tri/                 | Of all the invitation cards he gave out for the son's wedding only <b>three</b> hundred guest attended the occasion.<br>• <i>This is a case of alveolar plosive used instead of unaspirated dental fricative.</i>                                    |
| 19. | a. film<br>b. <b>fume</b>                  | /film/<br>/fju:m/               | He watches <b>film</b> as though his life depends on it                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 20. | a. <b>for</b><br>b. fur                    | /fə(r)/<br>/fɜ:(r)/             | No one can really tell what he does with the animal <b>fur</b> .<br>• <i>This is a case of an interchange of short central for long central vowel.</i>                                                                                               |

A careful consideration of our data reveals that there is a slight deviation in the sense in which the Nigerian users of English exercise the concept of phonemic neutralisation; going by Roach (2009:100) definition cited below. Roach describes neutralisation as

*cases where contrasts between phonemes which exist in other places in the language disappear in particular contexts.*

There is certain neutralisation that causes no confusion because of the high rate of redundancy of meaningful cues in English. Gimson (1980:284) provided explanation for such exceptionality when he writes: *the reduction and obscuration of the unaccented forms that words which are phonetically and phonemically separate when said in isolation may be neutralised under weak accent.* However, the data for this study disagrees with Gimson's defence as each of the cases cited evoked a measure of confusion.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, there are manifest evidences of phonemic neutralisation in the Nigerian learners of English oral performance. These include instances of:

- Interchange of short central vowel for long central vowel
- Cases of alveolar plosive used instead of the unaspirated dental fricative
- Long back vowel substituted with short central vowel
- Nasal velar sound replaced with alveolar nasal

Also, the intra-lingual system of English does not permit a total or wholesale transfer of pronunciation of a syllable to another similar structure in different environment. For example, the string *min* forms the initial part of a longer lexical item; a pseudo syllable nevertheless, the pronunciation of the following two words diverge radically as though they never had similar initial orthographic elements in words such as *minor* [mainə(r)] and *mineral* [minərəl]. The question now is why should there be a differential realization of the same constituent element in the phonetic sphere when the phonemic features show no divergence?

Some of the factors responsible for the neutralisation as identified by the author include fast speaking, imperfect learning, over simplification of the interlocutor's standard, wrong choice of word, wrong syllabification, etc.

The Nigerian learners of English can however overcome the prevalence of phonological neutralisation that marks their oral performance but not without a careful remedial approach.



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## **36. La Pluralisation des Noms en Français et En Fulfulde: Procédés et Marques**

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Le rôle de la langue maternelle de l'apprenant n'est pas négligeable dans l'enseignement et l'apprentissage d'une autre langue. Alors que certaines langues autochtones ont retenu l'attention de la recherche en linguistique, nous avons le sentiment que le fulfulde n'a pas bénéficié de même dans ce sens. L'envie de déterminer les processus et les marques de pluralisation des noms en français et en fulfulde et de dégager les conséquences pédagogiques liées aux similitudes et aux dissimilitudes par rapport à l'opposition singulier/pluriel dans les deux langues est le point central de cette recherche. Nous avons traité la pluralité de chaque langue indépendamment. Notre corpus est constitué de lexèmes tirés du langage quotidien des deux langues. Les résultats montrent qu'il y a des similitudes mais beaucoup plus de dissimilitudes en ce qui concerne les procédés et les marques de pluralisation des deux langues.

### **0. Introduction**

Le mot « pluriel » est emprunté du latin «pluralitas» qui signifie soit grand nombre, multiplicité ou diversité. C'est-à-dire, le pluriel s'emploie s'il y a deux ou plusieurs personnes ou choses. Dans le domaine linguistique, on parle de pluralité, qui s'oppose au singulier, en tant que forme grammaticale d'un mot indiquant un nombre supérieur à l'unité. Par exemple, voyons les formes du pluriel des mots donnés au singulier ci-dessus:

| <i>Français</i> |                 | <i>Fulfulde</i> |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Singulier       | Pluriel         | Singulier       | Pluriel         |
| Homme [ɔm]      | Hommes [ɔm]     | Gorko [gɔrko]   | Worbe [wɔrbe]   |
| Peul [pø]       | Peuls [pø]      | Pullo [pullo]   | Fulbe [fulbe]   |
| Vache [vaʃ]     | Vaches [vaʃ]    | Nagge [nagge]   | Na'i [na'i]     |
| Chambre [ʃãbr]  | Chambres [ʃãbr] | Suudu [su:du]   | Suudí [su:dí]   |
| Eau [o]         | Eaux [o]        | Ndiyam [ndijam] | Ndiyam [ndijam] |

Parmi les procédés morphologiques qui favorisent le marquage du pluriel, on distingue à la suite d'Oshounniran (2008:52):

- l'affixation: par l'usage des préfixes, suffixes, infixes (alternance vocalique au sien du mot), etc.
- le redoublement: Par une opération qui répète une partie du mot ou le mot entier. En chinois par exemple; (rén 'homme', forme redoublée: rén rén 'les gens')

- 
- le supplétisme (changement complet du mot- « nous » pour « je » en français ou « on » pour « mi » en fulfulde), etc.

Il en ressort déjà de nos exemples ci-dessus que le français adopte l'ajout du suffixe « s » à l'écrit dans presque tous les noms au pluriel et que toutes les marques du pluriel dans les exemples du français ne se manifestent qu'à l'écrit et pas à l'oral. En fulfulde au contraire, il y a simultanément deux modifications: le changement de la consonne initiale et le changement du suffixe de classe, et il n'y a pas de distinction entre l'oral et l'écrit dans ce processus.

Les procédés et les marques qui aident à la réalisation de cette opposition à l'écrit comme aussi à l'oral est la tâche que nous nous assignons dans cette étude. Nous voulons atteindre les objectifs suivants:

- Enrichir la description des langues africaines en général, et en particulier celle du fulfulde.
- Identifier les ressources disponibles pour chacune d'elles (français/fulfulde) dans l'expression de la pluralité;
- Chercher à savoir les procédés et les marques de pluralisation des noms dans les deux langues.
- Établir les similitudes et/ou les dissimilitudes en ce qui concerne l'expression de la pluralité au niveau du nom.
- Faire ressortir les implications de ces similitudes, mais surtout des dissimilitudes, pour une meilleure stratégie d'apprentissage du français chez un apprenant pullophone.

## **1. La Pluralisation en Français**

### **1.1 La Pluralisation À L'écrit**

Parlant de pluralisation en français, notons tout premièrement qu'il existe deux systèmes qui ne sont pas toujours uniformes. Celui du français écrit et celui du français oral. Considérant la nécessité de comprendre ces deux réalités en étudiant le nombre en français, Weinrich (cité par Oshounniran, 2008:56) remarque que:

...du point de vue de la méthode (...) dans l'étude du nombre, il faut faire une distinction très nette entre les formes audibles et les formes écrites. Le système morphologique des distinctions du nombre est en français sensiblement différent à l'oral et en graphie.

Cela veut dire qu'il ne faut pas confondre les deux codes (oral ou écrit) dans le domaine de la pluralisation. Ceci parce que le français écrit n'est qu'une simple représentation graphique de la langue orale et le français oral ne représente que la forme audible de la langue écrite. Mais on ne doit pas confondre les deux codes. Selon Barra-Jover (2007:1), « ...un code écrit stable empêche que l'observateur (naïf ou avisé) réalise jusqu'à quel point la langue pratiquée par les locuteurs s'est transformée par rapport à sa description

idéalisée fondée sur l'écrit. » Pour nous, ceci fait une bonne justification du choix d'analyser les deux codes (écrite et oral) séparément.

### 1.1.1 Processus de Pluralisation À L'écrit

Celui qui parle de processus parle d'une manière de procéder pour aboutir à un résultat. Le processus de pluralisation est donc une manière ou bien un ensemble de règles et/ou de formalités qui doivent être observées pour parvenir à former le pluriel à partir du singulier.

Morphologiquement parlant, tous les membres de la classe nominale peuvent être spécifiés par rapport à l'opposition singulier / pluriel, sauf quelques exceptions (comme *arrhes*). En soutenant ce point de vue, Ojo (2005:121) affirme que: « ... nouns generally have both singular and plural forms ».

Pour Barra-Jover (2007:3), cette spécification se fait de façon régulière avec  $\emptyset$  pour le singulier et *-s* pour le pluriel et, de façon irrégulière pour certains masculins, avec les oppositions  $\emptyset$  / *-x* ou *al/aux*. Par exemple :

|        | singulier   | pluriel                  |
|--------|-------------|--------------------------|
| homme  | $\emptyset$ | hommes <i>-s</i>         |
| maison | $\emptyset$ | maisons <i>-s</i>        |
| cheveu | $\emptyset$ | cheveux <i>-x</i>        |
| noyau  | $\emptyset$ | noyaux <i>-x</i>         |
| cheval | $\emptyset$ | chevaux <i>-x</i> , etc. |

Il faut noter en premier lieu qu'en général se sont les noms finissant soit en *eu*, *au* ou *al* qui prennent l'*-x* au pluriel. Mais remarquons quand même que cette dernière n'a pas une portée générale (Ex. *bal/bals*). Ajoutons à cela aussi que les noms avec leurs terminaisons en *ail* au singulier changent cette terminaison à *aux* au pluriel (Exemple: *bail/baux*, *corail/coraux*, *travail/travaux*, etc.). Mais comme partout, il y a des exceptions (Exemple: *bétail/bétails*). Il faut également noter que les noms finissant en *ou* prennent un *-s* au pluriel (Exemple: *clou/clous*, *chouchou/chouchous*, *trou/trous*, etc.). Cependant, l'opposition est neutralisée pour les noms finissant en *-s*, en *-x* ou en *-z*. Exemples: *pays* = *pays*; *bois* = *bois*; *bras* = *bras*; *croix* = *croix*; *prix* = *prix*; *flux* = *flux*; *nez* = *nez*; *gaz* = *gaz* et *riz* = *riz*.

### 1.1.2 Marques du Pluriel À L'écrit

A partir donc de ce que nous avons vu dans la section précédente, il devient facile de dégager les marques de pluralisation des noms dans la langue française.

En général, la marque « *-s* » est la marque régulière qui forme la pluralité des noms en français écrit. Le « *-x* » est l'autre marque dans des cas d'exceptions. Mais il y a aussi les cas de neutralisation pour les noms qui se terminent en « *s*, *x*, *z* ».

## 1.2 La Pluralisation À L'oral en Français

Pour Hawkins & Towel (2001:17), « ... many nouns are marked for plural in written French, few differ in singular and plural form in spoken French... ». En tenant compte de ceci, nous partageons le même sentiment avec Barra-Jover (2007:2) qui dit que «... *le nombre en français oral peut être décrit de façon entièrement indépendante de celui du français écrit ...* ».

### 1.2.1 Processus de Pluralisation À L'oral

En général, les membres de la classe nominale ne possèdent pas de morphologie de pluriel à l'oral. Par conséquent, devant une séquence nominale sans déterminants telle que [oReR duveRtyR] (horaires d'ouvertures), seules les connaissances encyclopédiques des locuteurs permettront, si la question se pose vraiment, de déterminer si elle désigne des pluralités ou des individus (Barra-Jover, 2007:5). Cependant, il existe une marque sous-jacente /z/ que le contexte phonético-graphique peut faire émerger (Exemple: les enfants /lezãfã/). Tout de même, remarquons qu'un groupe en /al/, peu représentatif par rapport à l'ensemble des noms et des adjectifs, fait son pluriel en /o/ [Exemple: /metal/-/meto/ (métal-métaux), /frõtãl/-/frõtõ/ (frontal-frontaux)]. Il ne s'agit pas d'une règle morphologique mais d'oppositions plutôt lexicales comparables à d'autres plus isolées comme /baj/-/bo/ (bail – baux) ou /boef/-/bø/ (bœuf – bœufs) (Barra-Jover, 2007:7).

Ainsi, l'opposition singulier/pluriel (/fæmbr/-/fæmbr/) est marquée au niveau du déterminant et non sur le nom. Par exemple, /la#fæmbr/ - /le#fæmbr/, /ma#fæmbr/-/me#fæmbr/, /votr#fæmbr/-/vo#fæmbr/.

À l'intérieur du GN (groupe nominale), la marque /z/ peut apparaître devant les noms commençant par une voyelle (cas de liaison). Par exemple: Les enfants... /lezãfã.../, le pluriel du nom apparaît marqué par le morphème /z/ à cause de la liaison entre l'article et le nom (enfants).

### 1.2.2 Marques de Pluriel À L'oral

En général, soit on peut dire que le pluriel n'est pas marqué pour les noms en français oral, ou alors on dit qu'il est marqué morphologiquement par ce qu'on appelle le morphème zéro (Ø), sauf dans le cas de la liaison dans un groupe nominal où il est marqué par le morphème «z». Par exemple /lezãfã/ (Les enfants).

Ainsi, l'étude de la pluralisation d'une manière générale et brève, nous fait dire que le français oral est un système autonome et ses caractéristiques pourraient être décrites sans référence au français écrit.

## 2. La Pluralisation en Fulfulde

### 2.1 La Pluralisation À L'écrit

Tout d'abord, il est très important de dire et de savoir qu'une bonne compréhension du processus de pluralisation en fulfulde dépend largement d'une bonne explication et compréhension de deux réalités linguistiques autour desquelles se forme le pluriel dans cette langue: celle de classes nominales et celle de l'alternance consonantique.

En linguistique, le terme « classe nominale » se réfère à un système de catégorisation de noms. Un nom peut appartenir à une classe en raison des caractéristiques de son référent (comme le sexe), mais souvent l'appartenance d'un nom à une classe donnée est clairement conventionnelle (en ligne sur [http://www.webpulaaku.net/defte/dwarnott/fula\\_literature.html](http://www.webpulaaku.net/defte/dwarnott/fula_literature.html). Consulté 11/11/2003).

Les langues du Niger-Congo en général et le fulfulde en particulier se caractérisent par un système de classe nominale très robuste. Il y a 25 classes nominales communes aux nombreux dialectes de cette langue (Arnott 1974:5). Les classes nominales en fulfulde sont des catégories abstraites avec certaines classes ayant des attributs sémantiques qui caractérisent un sous-ensemble de ses membres, et d'autres étant marquées par une adhésion trop diverse pour justifier toute catégorisation sémantique des membres de la classe (Paradis 1992 : 25).

### 2.1.1 Processus de Pluralisation À L'écrit

Le sexe n'a pas de rôle dans le système de classe nominale en fulfulde et le marquage des sexes se fait avec des adjectifs plutôt que des marqueurs de classe (Arnott 1985:74). Selon McIntosh (1984:45-46), les classes nominales sont marquées par des suffixes de noms. Pour les détails, le tableau ci-dessous illustre les classes nominales, la propriété sémantique associée à chaque classe et un exemple de nom avec son marqueur de classe.

Les classes 1 et 2 peuvent être décrites comme des classes personnelles, les classes 3 à 6 comme des classes diminutives, les classes 7 à 8 comme des classes de suppléance et les classes 9 à 25 comme des classes neutres. Ce tableau est formé sur la base de la description du fulfulde Kaceccereere par McIntosh (1984), qu'il décrit comme étant «essentiellement la même» que la description des classes nominales du dialecte peul de Gombe par Arnott (1970).

|     | <i>Classe nominale</i> | <i>Signification</i>                                           | <i>Exemple &amp; Sens</i>            |
|-----|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1.  | O                      | Personne au Singulier                                          | laam-dō «Chef»                       |
| 2.  | be                     | personne au pluriel                                            | laam-be "Chefs"                      |
| 3.  | Ŋgel                   | Singulier diminutif                                            | loo-ŋgel «Petit pot»                 |
| 4.  | Kal                    | quantité diminutive                                            | kuroh-al 'Petite quantité de farine' |
| 5.  | Ŋgum                   | diminutif péjoratif                                            | laam-ŋgum «chef sans importance»     |
| 6.  | Kon/koy                | Pluriel diminutif                                              | ullu-koy «Petits chats / chatons»    |
| 7.  | Ŋga                    | Augmentatif au singulier                                       | dēm-ŋga 'Grosse langue'              |
| 8.  | Ko                     | Pluriel augmentatif, plus souvent des noms en classe 7 (Ŋga)   | dēm-ko «grosses langues»             |
| 9.  | Nde                    | Divers, y compris les objets globulaires, les lieux, les temps | loo-nde « Pot de stockage »          |
| 10. | Ndi                    | Divers, y compris les                                          | Njam-ndi                             |



|     |      |                                                                                     |                                |
|-----|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|     |      | indénombrables                                                                      | 'fer'                          |
| 11. | Ndu  | Divers; y compris certains animaux et parties du corps                              | ullu-ndu<br>'chat'             |
| 12. | Ŋga  | Divers, y compris de certains animaux (pas forcément au augmentatifs)               | nood-a<br>'Crocodile'          |
| 13. | Ŋge  | Divers, y compris vache, feu, soleil, abstrait etc.                                 | Naa-Ŋge<br>'soleil'            |
| 14. | Ŋgo  | Divers, y compris animaux, choses abstraites, etc.                                  | nyor-go<br>'Mat de couverture' |
| 15. | Ŋgu  | Divers, y compris insectes, vers, poissons, certains noms abstraits et collectives. | ḡow-ŋgu<br>«Moustique»         |
| 16. | Ŋgal | Divers, y compris d'arbres et de plantes, leurs pièces, instrument abstrait etc.    | ḡem-ŋgal<br>'tongue'           |
| 17. | Ŋgol | Divers, souvent de longues choses                                                   | taddor-gol 'Ceinture'          |
| 18. | Ka   | Divers, y compris des choses et des instruments abstrait.                           | mannd-a<br>«Sel»               |
| 19. | Ki   | Divers, y compris les arbres et les instruments à lames                             | daŋ-ki<br>«Abri temporaire»    |
| 20. | Ko   | Divers, y compris graminées, plantes choses pas forcément augmentative              | Haa-ko<br>«Soupe»              |
| 21. | Kol  | Veau                                                                                | nyalh-ol 'Veau'                |
| 22. | ḡam  | Liquides                                                                            | tu'y-am «Saignement de nez»    |
| 23. | ḡum  | Neutre                                                                              | maw-ḡum «Grande chose»         |
| 24. | ḡe   | Pluriel non humain                                                                  | daŋ-ḡe «Refuges»               |
| 25. | ḡi   | Pluriel non humain                                                                  | njaayrii-ji «Espaces ouverts»  |

De manière générale, C'est à travers les marqueurs de classe nominale surtout attachés au nom en tant que suffixe qu'on reconnaît la classe nominale à laquelle appartient le nom. Une classe nominale est le groupe particulier dont chaque nom doit appartenir, mais un marqueur de classe nominale, aussi appelé suffixe nominale, est un suffixe particulier attaché au substantif qui indique la classe d'un tel nom.

En outre et particulièrement en fulfulde, le suffixe de classe s'ajoute au nom sans modification de forme comme dans les mots «Gork-o» ou «Wor-be» où les suffixe «o» et «be» s'ajoutent respectivement à «Gork» et «Wor» sans subir de modification. Mais dans d'autres cas, seule la partie vocalique du suffixe de classe est ajoutée au nom, par exemple le suffixe 'nge' qui devient 'e' dans les mots 'hiit-e', 'Nagg-e' et 'Ŋg-a' qui devient 'a' dans 'nood-a' et beaucoup d'autres cas dans nos exemples ci-dessus. Parfois,

c'est la structure et la catégorie grammaticale du nom en question qui détermine l'usage d'une forme pleine ou élidée du suffixe.

Pour réussir à identifier à quelle classe nominale appartient tel ou tel nom, nous proposons l'emploi d'adjectif démonstratif avec chaque nom. Notre proposition est guidée par le constat que les adjectifs démonstratifs en fulfulde sont exactement identiques aux marqueurs de classes nominales dont chacun ne peut s'employer qu'avec le nom qui le convient. Par exemple pour dire *cet homme*, on dit *o'gorko* ('o' adjectif démonstratif et 'o' marqueur de classe) et jamais *be gorko* ou *di gorko* ou *ka gorko* ou même n'importe quelle autre marque parmi les 24 classes. Le même pour *ces hommes*: on dira *be worbe* et jamais *o'worbe*, *ndu worbe*, etc. Ainsi. Si nous reprenons quelques exemples dans le tableau ci-dessus en mettant les pronoms démonstratifs qui convient à chaque nom, nous aurons:

|               |                          |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| O' laam-dô    | « ce chef »              |
| be laam-be    | « ces chefs »            |
| Ŋgel loo-ŋgel | « ce petit pot »         |
| Nde loo-nde   | « ce pot de stockage »   |
| Ndi Njam-ndi  | « ce fer »               |
| Ndu ullu-ndu  | « ce chat »              |
| Ŋga nood-a    | « ce crocodile »         |
| Ŋge Naa-Ŋge   | « ce soleil »            |
| Ŋgu bow-ŋgu   | « ce moustique »         |
| Ŋgal dëm-ŋgal | « cette langue »         |
| Dam tu'y-am   | « ce saignement de nez » |
| Dum maw-dum   | « cette grande chose »   |

Par ailleurs, précisons que les deux marqueurs de classes nominales 7 et 12 sont les mêmes (Ŋga). Cela peut être perturbant en particulier chez un locuteur non natif de la langue mais, si soigneusement étudié, la différence est claire. Il suffit de regarder la description qui dit « augmentative » dans le premier. Par exemple on dira, Ŋgal leggal (cet arbre) qui appartient 'Ŋgal'(16), mais quand vous voulez dire un très grand arbre, vous dites ' Ŋga legga ; un 'changement de la classe' : Ŋgal'(16) à 'Ŋga'(7) avec un sens d'augmentation. Par contre, la 'Ŋga' (12) est une classe contenant les noms normales sans aucun sens de suppléance comme, Ŋga mbeewa (ce chèvre), Ŋga mbaala (ce mouton). De même pour «ko» en 8 et en 20. Tandis que le «ko» en 8 est le pluriel de l'augmentation, souvent des noms de la classe Ŋga (7), le «ko» en 20 est une classe nominale simple comme dans haako «ce soupe» (sans augmentation, sans pluralisation). Ainsi la quasi-majorité des noms de la classe Ŋga (7) changent à «ko» (8) pour le pluriel. Dans nos exemples précédents, nous avons dit Ŋga legga «ce grand arbre». Au pluriel ceci sera ko Lekko «ces grands arbres».

Concernant l'opposition singulier/pluriel, nous constatons qu'en fulfulde, chaque classe nominale a une autre classe qui représente son pluriel. Ainsi, les 25 classes mentionnées ci-dessus se subdivisent comme suit:

| <i>Classes au singulier</i> | <i>Classes au pluriel</i> | <i>Marques de classes au pluriel</i> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Classe 1                    | classe 2                  | (be)                                 |
| Classes 3 à 5               | classe 6                  | (kon/koy)                            |
| Classe 7                    | classe 8                  | (ko)                                 |
| Classes 9 à 23              | classes 24 et 25          | (de et di)                           |

Exemplifions cela plus clairement comme suit:

| <i>Classes</i> | <i>Singulier</i>   | <i>Pluriel</i>    | <i>signification</i>    |                           |
|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1/2            | laam- <b>do</b>    | laam- <b>be</b>   | chef                    | chefs                     |
| 3/6            | bin- <b>ngel</b>   | bik- <b>koy</b>   | enfant                  | enfants                   |
| 4/6            | biraa- <b>kal</b>  | biraa- <b>kon</b> | petite quantité de lait | petites quantités de lait |
| 5/6            | laam- <b>ngum</b>  | laam- <b>koy</b>  | petit chef              | petits chefs              |
| 7/8            | loo- <b>nga</b>    | loo- <b>ko</b>    | gros pot                | gros pots                 |
| 9/24           | loo- <b>nde</b>    | loo- <b>de</b>    | pot de stockage         | pots de stockage          |
| 10/24          | les- <b>di</b>     | les- <b>de</b>    | terre, pays             | territoires, pays.        |
| 13/24          | hiit- <b>e</b>     | giit- <b>e</b>    | incendie                | incendies                 |
| 14/24          | nyor- <b>go</b>    | nyor- <b>de</b>   | tapis                   | tapis                     |
| 16/24          | dem- <b>ngal</b>   | dem- <b>de</b>    | langue                  | langues                   |
| 18/24          | ngas- <b>ka</b>    | gas- <b>de</b>    | trou                    | trous                     |
| 19/24          | daŋ- <b>ki</b>     | daŋ- <b>de</b>    | abri                    | abris                     |
| 22/24          | njar- <b>am</b>    | jar- <b>e</b>     | boisson                 | boissons                  |
| 23/24          | loowir- <b>dum</b> | loowir- <b>de</b> | entonnoir               | entonnoirs                |
| 10/25          | ndam- <b>ndi</b>   | dam- <b>di</b>    | bouc                    | boucs                     |
| 11/25          | en- <b>ndu</b>     | en- <b>di</b>     | sein                    | seins                     |
| 12/25          | nood- <b>a</b>     | nood- <b>i</b>    | crocodile               | crocodiles.               |
| 13/25          | nagg- <b>e</b>     | na'- <b>i</b>     | vache                   | vaches                    |
| 15/25          | bow- <b>ngu</b>    | bow- <b>di</b>    | moustique               | moustiques                |
| 17/25          | taador- <b>gol</b> | taador- <b>di</b> | ceinture                | ceintures                 |
| 21/25          | nyala- <b>hol</b>  | nyalb- <b>i</b>   | veau                    | veaux                     |

NB:→ Noter le changement de 'h' à 'g' en 13/24, 'nga' à 'g' en 18/24 et 'nj' à 'j' en 22/24. Cela est simplement un cas de la deuxième réalité qui concerne l'alternance de la

consonne initiale pour passer du singulier au pluriel en fulfulde dont nous avons parlé au début, et dont nous allons traiter très bientôt.

→ pour le changement de ‘dī’ à ‘i’ en 12/25 et ‘dē’ à ‘e’ en 13/24 etc., la règle selon McIntosh (1989) nous fait comprendre que le pluriel des classes 24 et 25 (dē et dī) finit parfois soit en *e* ou en *i* surtout si dans la dernière syllabe il y a :

- (1) *a, e, ou i*, le pluriel prend *e* dans la plupart des cas.
- (2) *o ou u*, le pluriel prend *i* dans la plupart des cas surtout chez les noms des animaux.

Précisons aussi que les polysyllabes terminant en *hi, al* et quelques-uns en *re* prend *je* au lieu de la dernière syllabe du pluriel. Par Exemple : dukuhi=dukuuje (arbre de papaye/arbres de papaye), kubewal=kubeeje (arbre de gombo/arbres de gombo) et lagaawal=lagaaje (arc/arcs), etc.

→ En ce qui concerne le changement de ‘nagge’ à ‘n’ai’ en 13/25, nous le considérons comme un cas d’exception qui est bien normal dans chaque règle de la langue.

La même relation de singulier / pluriel existe dans certains couples où un nom de classe 24 ou 25 comporte une racine identique à celui d’un nom dans certaines classes comme celle de 10, 15, 18 ou 23. Par exemple :

|       |         |            |               |                 |
|-------|---------|------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 10/25 | njay-ri | njayrii-ji | espace ouvert | espaces ouverts |
| 15/25 | nyaw-u  | nyawuu-ji  | maladie       | maladies        |
| 18/25 | hujj-a  | hujjaa-ji  | excuse        | excuses         |
| 23/25 | lam-mbu | lammbuu-ji | champ irrigué | champs irrigués |

Comme indiqué plus haut, les classes 24 et 25 sont tous deux les classes du pluriel correspondant aux classes neutres au singulier 9 à 23. Le jumelage singulier / pluriel de ces deux classes peut être résumé comme suit :

- (1). les catégories de noms suivantes font leur pluriel avec la classe 25 (dī) :

(a) tous les noms des classes 11 (ndu), 15 (Ŋgu), 17 (Ŋgol) et 21 (kol), c'est-à-dire, la plupart des noms terminant par -u ou -ol, par exemple :

|       |             |            |           |            |
|-------|-------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| 11/25 | en-ndu      | en- dī     | Sein      | seins      |
| 15/25 | bow-ŋgu     | bow- dī    | Moustique | moustiques |
| 17/25 | taaddor-gol | taador- dī | Ceinture  | ceintures  |
| 21/25 | Nb          | nyalb-i    | Veau      | veaux      |

(b) tous les noms de la classe 12 (ṅga) (la quasi-totalité se réfèrent à des animaux) et des noms faisant référence à des animaux dans les classes 10 (ndi) et 13 (nge), par exemple :

|       |          |        |           |             |
|-------|----------|--------|-----------|-------------|
| 12/25 | nood-a   | nood-i | crocodile | crocodiles. |
| 10/25 | ndam-ndi | dam-dī | bouc      | boucs       |
| 13/25 | nagg-e   | na'i   | vache     | vaches      |

(c) tous les cas où le suffixe pluriel est ajouté à la forme du singulier (la racine étant identique à l'ensemble des noms au singulier), par exemple : 18/25 hujjaa / hujjaa-ji excuse / excuses, et d'autres exemples précédemment donnés.

(2) tous les autres noms dans les classes neutres au singulier font leur pluriel avec la classe 24 (dē), c'est-à-dire tous les noms dans les classes 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 22, 23 à l'exception de ceux mentionnés en 1 (b) et (c) ci-dessus, par exemple :

|       |            |           |                 |                    |
|-------|------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 9/24  | loo-nde    | loo- dē   | pot de stockage | pots de stockage   |
| 10/24 | les-di     | les- dē   | terre, pays     | territoires, pays. |
| 13/24 | hiit-e     | giit-e    | feu             | incendies          |
| 14/24 | nyor-go    | nyor- dē  | tapis           | Tapis              |
| 16/24 | dēm- ṅgal  | dēm-dē    | langue          | les langues        |
| 18/24 | ṅgas-ka    | gas- dē   | trou            | Trous              |
| 19/24 | daṅ-ki     | daṅ- dē   | abri            | Abris              |
| 22/24 | njar-am    | jar-e     | boisson         | boissons           |
| 23/24 | loowir-dum | loowir-dē | entonnoir       | entonnoirs         |

Avant de mettre fin à la formation de pluriel au niveau de la terminaison, il faut ajouter qu'à part les classes nominales du pluriel (6e, Kon/koi, ko, dē et dī) qui forment le pluriel de plupart de noms fulfulde, il y a ceux qui font leur pluriel en EN et en JI.

Pour le cas de EN, le substantif se réfère toujours aux êtres humaines dont le singulier se termine souvent en jo, par exemple :

| Singulier  | Pluriel   | signification                   |
|------------|-----------|---------------------------------|
| meree-jo   | meere-en  | personne sans valeur/paresseuse |
| annabii-jo | annabo-en | prophète                        |

Pour celui de JI, il y a les cas des noms liquides et certains noms indénombrables comme quelques exemples déjà vus ci-dessus, mais cela est plus généralisé dans la pluralisation des noms empruntés. Par exemple :

| Singulier | Pluriel    | Signification |
|-----------|------------|---------------|
| Telefon   | telefon-ji | téléphone     |
| Moota     | mootaa-ji  | Voiture       |

La deuxième réalité associée à la pluralisation nominale en fulfulde est l'alternance consonantique ou la mutation qui est répandue parmi les langues indo-européennes comme le gallois, le lapon, le finnois, etc. Dans les langues du Niger-Congo, ses principaux exemples se rencontrent dans les langues de l'Atlantique, notamment le fulfulde où le phénomène a été largement un sujet de discussion, de débat et de contestation parmi les spécialistes de la linguistique fulfulde (Girei, 2010 :32). Une caractéristique importante en fulfulde est l'alternance morpho-phonémique de consonnes initiales dans les formes au singulier et au pluriel (par exemple, w-b-mb, r-d-nd, s-c et f-p). (Abba, 1991:44).

Selon Breedveld (1995 :60), l'ensemble du système de l'alternance de la consonne initiale en fulfulde fonctionne pour répondre à certaines exigences morphologiques de la langue. De manière générale, l'opération d'alternance des consonnes initiales s'applique aux noms, aux verbes et aux adjectifs. Abba (1991 :48) dans son article « Initial Consonant Permutation in Fulfulde Verbs and Nouns » soutient que :

Consonant alternation in Fulfulde nouns is the most complicated system. In verbs it is more systematic and comprehensive. Moreover, in the verbs of the first type, it is not necessary to permute the initial consonant...., however, in nouns, it is virtually important to use the alternation system; otherwise one will be speaking nonsense.

Dans ce cadre, les changements que subissent un nom pour montrer le pluriel reposent principalement sur la classe à laquelle appartient le nom : appartient-il à la classe personnelle/humaine ou à la classe non-personnelle/non-humaine. Cette division est extrêmement importante car il est le principe fondamental du génie de la langue (Arnott, 1970 :23).

Ainsi, dans notre intention de rendre les choses plus faciles, nous décidons d'aborder le sujet comme suit :

- (A) Noms Personnels
- (B) Noms Non-Personnels.

Mais tout d'abord identifions d'une manière générale les consonnes concernées dans ce processus d'alternance avant de traiter les deux sous-titres ci-dessus l'un après l'autre.

|                            |               |                                          |
|----------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------------|
| Labiale-occlusive-Sonore   | /b/..... /w/  | Labiale-fricative -sonore                |
| Labiale-occlusive- sourde  | /p/..... /f/  | Labiale-fricative-sonore                 |
| Vélaire-occlusive-Sonore   | /g/ ...../w/  | Labial-fricative-sonore                  |
| Vélaire-occlusive-Sonore   | /k/...../h/   | Glottale-fricative-sourde                |
| Palatale-occlusive- sonore | /j/ ..... /y/ | Palatale- fricative-sonore               |
| Dentale-implosive-sonore   | /d/..... /r/  | Dentale-fricative vibrante roulé- sonore |
| Palatale-occlusive-Sourde  | /c/..... /s/  | Sifflante-fricative-sourde               |



**(A) Noms Personnels (humains)**

Les consonnes qui s'alternent pour les noms personnels en vertu des lois de chiasme phonétiques de la langue sont les suivantes:

| Singulier | Pluriel |
|-----------|---------|
| B         | W       |
| D         | R       |
| G         | W ou Y  |
| J         | Y       |
| K         | H       |
| P         | F       |
| C         | S       |

Pour justifier cela, passons maintenant aux exemples pratiques de chaque cas.

| <i>Singulier</i> | <i>Pluriel</i>    | <i>Signification</i>                |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| B                | W                 |                                     |
| <b>Bappaajo</b>  | <b>Wappaibe</b>   | oncle (s) paternel (s)              |
| <b>Bambaado</b>  | <b>Wambaabe</b>   | mendiant (s) professionnel (s)      |
| D                | R                 |                                     |
| <b>Demoowo</b>   | <b>Remoobe</b>    | agriculteur (s)                     |
| <b>Debbo</b>     | <b>Reube</b>      | femme (s)                           |
| G                | W                 |                                     |
| <b>Gorko</b>     | <b>Worbe</b>      | homme (s)                           |
| <b>Gujjo</b>     | <b>Woibe</b>      | voleur (s)                          |
| G                | Y                 |                                     |
| <b>Ginnaado</b>  | <b>Yinaabe</b>    | un/des fou (s)                      |
| <b>Gimoowo</b>   | <b>Yimoobe</b>    | chanteur (s)                        |
| J                | Y                 |                                     |
| <b>Joldo</b>     | <b>Yolbe</b>      | jeune (s)                           |
| <b>Jamo</b>      | <b>Yambe</b>      | une/des personne (s) en bonne santé |
| K                | H                 |                                     |
| <b>Kodo</b>      | <b>Hobbe</b>      | étranger (s)                        |
| <b>Kaanaado</b>  | <b>Haanaabe</b>   | une/des personne (s) folle (s)      |
| P                | F                 |                                     |
| <b>Pullo</b>     | <b>Fulbe</b>      | peul (s)                            |
| <b>Pukaraajo</b> | <b>Fukoraabe</b>  | élève (s)                           |
| C                | S                 |                                     |
| <b>Coroowo</b>   | <b>Soroowoobe</b> | vendeur (s)                         |
| <b>Coydo</b>     | <b>Soibe</b>      | une/des personne (s) pauvre (s)     |

(B) Noms Non-Personnels (non-humains, les choses y compris)

Les consonnes initiales qui changent ou s'alternent en passant du singulier au pluriel pour les noms non-personnels sont:

| Singulier | Pluriel |
|-----------|---------|
| W         | B ou G  |
| R         | D       |
| Y         | J ou G  |
| H         | K       |
| F         | P       |
| S         | C       |

Par exemple:

| Singulier       | Pluriel        | Signification                  |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| W               | B              |                                |
| <b>Waandu</b>   | <b>Baadi</b>   | un/des singe (s)               |
| <b>Wamnde</b>   | <b>Bamde</b>   | un des âne (s)                 |
| W               | G              |                                |
| <b>Wuro</b>     | <b>Gure</b>    | une/des ville (s)              |
| <b>Wauru</b>    | <b>Gaawi</b>   | un/des puits                   |
| R               | D              |                                |
| <b>Rawaandu</b> | <b>Dawaadi</b> | un/des chien (s)               |
| <b>Resirde</b>  | <b>Desirde</b> | un/des lieu (x) de stockage    |
| H               | K              |                                |
| <b>Haire</b>    | <b>Kaa'e</b>   | un/des caillou (x)             |
| <b>Hofru</b>    | <b>Koppi</b>   | un/des genou (x)               |
| Y               | J              |                                |
| <b>Yaare</b>    | <b>Jahe</b>    | un/des scorpion (s)            |
| <b>Yamnde</b>   | <b>Jamde</b>   | une/des pièce (s) de monnaie   |
| Y               | G              |                                |
| <b>Yimre</b>    | <b>Gimi</b>    | une/des chanson (s)            |
| <b>Yeeso</b>    | <b>Geese</b>   | une/des face (s) ou visage (s) |
| F               | P              |                                |
| <b>Fattude</b>  | <b>Pattule</b> | un/des quartier (s)            |
| <b>Fayande</b>  | <b>Payande</b> | une/des marmite (s)            |
| S               | C              |                                |
| <b>Solndu</b>   | <b>Colli</b>   | un/des oiseau (x)              |
| <b>Sauru</b>    | <b>Cabbi</b>   | un/des berger (s)              |

À ce point, il faut tout d'abord remarquer l'opposition existant sur les changements consonantiques des noms personnels et des noms non-personnels pour passer du singulier au pluriel. C'est-à-dire la juxtaposition de  $b \rightarrow w$  pour les noms humains et  $w \rightarrow b$  pour les noms non-humains par exemple. En fait, c'est le cas presque partout.  $D \rightarrow R$  pour l'humain mais  $R \rightarrow D$  pour le non humain. D'autres cas incluent :  $K \rightarrow H = H \rightarrow K$ ,  $P \rightarrow F = F \rightarrow P$ ,  $C \rightarrow S = S \rightarrow C$ , etc.

Toujours concernant l'alternance de la consonne initiale à cet égard, une nasale initiale du mot au singulier tombe toujours au pluriel. Par exemple, mbeewa/be'i, (chèvre(s)), Ngaari/ga'i (taureau(x)), Ngesa/gese (champ(s)), Ngeeloba/geelodi (chameau(x)), Ngaska/gasde (trou(s)), etc. Ici, il n'y a pas une alternance en tant que telle mais une chute de la consonne nasale qui n'est remplacée par aucune autre consonne.

Ceci étant dit, il est très primordial de bien préciser que comme dans n'importe quelle règle, il y a toujours des exceptions. Le fait que nous n'avons pas donné des exemples dans les cas ci-dessus ne signifie pas nécessairement qu'il n'y en a pas. En fait, elles (exceptions) sont si nombreuses et déroutantes que selon Taylor (1953:16) «... when one begins to make lists of exception, they are so many that, they almost lead one to deny the existence of any regularity».

Néanmoins, nous pouvons garantir que la compréhension linguistique des caractéristiques des terminaisons de classe et de l'alternance consonantique est indispensable à la pleine appréciation du génie de la langue, non seulement en ce qui concerne l'opposition singulier/pluriel mais aussi dans plusieurs aspects grammaticaux de la langue.

### **2.1.2 Marques de Pluriel À L'écrit**

À partir de l'analyse ci-dessus sur le processus de pluralisation, nous pouvons facilement dégager les marques de pluralisation des noms en fulfulde.

De manière générale, « -be », « -kon/koy » « -ko » « -de » et « -di » sont les marques régulières qui forment la pluralité des noms en fulfulde : -be, étant la marque de pluralisation pour les noms de classe nominale 1, kon ou koy pour les classes 3 à 5, ko pour la classe 7 et de et di pour les classes 9 à 23. Le « -en », « -ji », « -i » et « -e » font d'autres marques dans des cas d'exceptions. Le « -en » étant la marque de pluralité pour les noms de classe nominale 1 (personnel) qui se terminent en « -jo », « -ji » pour la plupart des noms empruntés (humains ou non-humains), « -i » et « -e » pour majorité des noms non-personnels (surtout les animaux) qui se terminent en -a, -e, -i, -o ou -u.

## **2.2 La Pluralisation À L'oral en Fulfulde**

Globalement, le système phonologique du peul ne pose pas trop de difficultés. Mukoshy (1991:21) soutient cet avis en disant que:

The phonology of Fulfulde as a language represents very little difficulty in the fact that the language is not tonal in any sense of the term, and the differences in the dialects are lexical rather than phonological.

De même, en dépit de sa propagation, la langue ne devient pas morphologiquement et syntaxiquement très diversifiée et elle a conservé son système phonologique à peu près intact. Cependant, il y a quelques changements phonologiques mais, la plupart de ces changements sont limités à l'influence de certaines langues et aux différences dialectales mineures qui n'ont pas beaucoup d'importance.

Phonologiquement, le fulfulde a 37 phonèmes repartis en 10 phonèmes vocaliques, (5 brefs et 5 longs) et 27 phonèmes consonantiques, à savoir:

→ Phonèmes vocaliques brefs : /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /u/.

→ Phonèmes vocaliques longs : /a:/, /e:/, /i:/, /o:/, /u:/.

→ Phonèmes consonantiques : /ʔ/, /b/, /ɓ/, /mb/, /c/, /d/, /ɗ/, /nd/, /f/, /g/, /ng/, /h/, /j/, /nj/, /k/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /ny/, /ɲ/, /p/, /r/, /s/, /t/, /v/, /w/, /y/, Sow (1998) en ligne sur: <http://faryka.e-monsite.com/medias/files/harmonie-vocalique-fulfulde.pdf>.

Par contre, l'orthographe du fulfulde fait appel à un alphabet de 32 lettres composées de 27 consonnes et 5 voyelles. Ils sont représentés ci-dessous:

a, aa, b, mb, ɓ, c, d, nd, e, ee, f, g, ng, h, i, ii, j, nj, k, l, m, n, ny, ɲ, o, oo, p, r, s, t, u, uu, v, w, y, Y, '.

Par correspondance entre les deux systèmes, on obtiendra:

#### voyelles

| Orthographiques | A a | E e, | I i | O o, | U u |
|-----------------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| Phonèmes        | /a/ | /ɛ/  | /i/ | /ɔ/  | /u/ |

Notons que la longueur vocalique est représentée à l'écrit par un redoublement de la voyelle graphique : /a:/ = aa, /e:/ = ee, /i:/ = ii, /o:/ = oo, /u:/ = uu. Ne pas marquer cette longueur ou ce redoublement vocalique est une faute grave en fulfulde puisque certains mots ne se distinguent que par cette opposition de longueur, ex: **geese (les faces ou visages)** mais **gese (les champs)**.

#### Consonnes

| Ortho. | B b | ɓ ɓ | C c | D d | ɗ ɗ | F f | G g | H h | J j |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Phon.  | /b/ | /ɓ/ | /c/ | /d/ | /ɗ/ | /f/ | /g/ | /h/ | /j/ |

| Ortho. | K k | L l | M m | Mb mb | N n | Nd nd | Ng ng | Nj nj | Ny ny |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Phon.  | /k/ | /l/ | /m/ | /mb/  | /n/ | /nd/  | /ng/  | /ɲj/  | /ɲ/   |

| Ortho. | N   | P p | R r | S s | T t, | W w | Y y, | Y y' | '   |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|
| Phon.  | /ɲ/ | /p/ | /r/ | /s/ | /t/  | /w/ | /j/  | /y/  | /ʔ/ |

### 2.2.1 Processus De Pluralisation À L'oral

Considérant la réalité dans notre analyse en 2.1.1, il nous semble très primordiale de débiter celui-ci en précisant que le fulfulde, à l'instar de beaucoup de langues africaines, jouit d'une correspondance entre la phonie et la graphie. En d'autres termes, un graphème correspond à un phonème et vice-versa. On écrit donc comme on parle à l'opposé des langues européennes comme le français et l'anglais. Par exemple:

| Ecrit     | Oral        |
|-----------|-------------|
| Ful-6e    | /fʊl6e/     |
| payan-dē  | /pajandē/   |
| dawaa-dī  | /dawa:dī/   |
| 6ik-koy   | /6ikkɔɪ/    |
| lam-kon   | /lamkɔn/    |
| haa-ko    | /ha:kɔ/     |
| annabo-en | /annabɔ'en/ |
| mootaa-ji | /mɔ:ta:dʒɪ/ |

Ces exemples révèlent et justifient qu'il n'y a pas en principe d'écart entre le système phonique et le système orthographique en fulfulde. Ainsi, le processus de pluralisation à l'écrit tient aussi à l'oral dans cette langue.

### 2.2.2 Marques de Pluralisation À L'oral

Il ressort de ce que nous avons dit et venons de voir ci-dessus que les marques de pluralité à l'oral seront les mêmes à l'écrit. Ainsi, donnant les marques déjà identifiées à l'écrit une transcription phonétique, nous aurons cette fois-ci comme marques de pluralité à l'oral les suivants: /6e/, /dē/, /dī/, /kɔɪ/ ou /kɔn/, /kɔ/, /en/, /dʒɪ/, /ɪ/ et /e/.

## 3. La Synthèse

Pour réaliser notre but qui est de déterminer les processus et les marques de pluralisation des noms en français et en fulfulde, nous avons analysé ce concept dans chaque langue indépendamment. Ayant fait cela, la synthèse de nos résultats est la préoccupation ici. En effet, c'est après l'avoir fait que nous pouvons vraiment dégager les points de similarités et/ou divergences entre les deux langues par rapport au concept de pluralité (processus et marques).

### 3.1 Points De Similarités

Le point commun le plus évident dans le processus de la pluralisation à l'écrit de nos deux langues concernées est celui de suffixation. C'est-à-dire avec un simple ajout aux formes au singulier de certains suffixes disponibles pour chacune des langues comme ressources de pluralité, nous obtenons des formes au pluriel. Par exemple:

| Français  |              | Fulfulde  |              |
|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| Singulier | Pluriel      | Singulier | Pluriel      |
| Homme     | hommes -s    | Gorko     | worbe -be    |
| Chien     | chiens -s    | rawaandu  | dawaadi -di  |
| Cheval    | chevaux -x   | Puccu     | pucci -i     |
| Voiture   | voitures -s  | moota     | mootaaji -ji |
| paresseux | paresseux -x | meerejo   | meere'en -en |
| Feu       | feux -x      | Hiite     | giite -e     |

Ce qu'il faut peut-être signaler comme écart entre les deux langues est le fait qu'en fulfulde, nous n'avons pas un ajout en tant que tel comme en français mais plutôt une alternance entre suffixes de classes au singulier et au pluriel. Donc en fulfulde, un suffixe (morphème) fait place à un autre pour marquer le pluriel. Ex:

Français: homme → homme + s = hommes (ajout suffixal)

Fulfulde: gorko → wor + be = worbe (alternance suffixale : be remplace ko).

Y a-t-il une ressemblance de marques de pluralisation à l'écrit des noms entre le français et le fulfulde? Nous en doutons très fort. Jusqu'ici nous connaissons de manière générale que le français se sert des morphèmes -s et -x pour réaliser le pluriel à partir du singulier à l'écrit. Les deux ne font pas partir des neuf morphèmes disponibles comme marques de pluralisation à l'écrit des noms en fulfulde, à savoir: -be, -de, -di, -ko, -koy/-kon, -en, -ji, -i et -e

À l'oral, nos données révèlent clairement qu'il n'y a aucune similitude dans les processus de pluralisation à l'oral pour les noms en français et en fulfulde. En fait, alors que d'une manière générale les noms ne possèdent pas de morphologie de pluriel à l'oral en français, cela est le contraire en fulfulde. En plus, pendant que le français reconnaît le processus de liaison à l'intérieur du GN avec les noms commençant par les voyelles, cela est un processus inconnu en fulfulde.

Morphologiquement, nous avons établi jusqu'à ce point que les noms sont marqués par le morphème zéro (Ø) à l'oral et (-z) dans le cas de liaison en français. Par contre, les noms en fulfulde ont /be/, /de/, /di/, /kɔ/ ou kɔn/, /ko/, /en/, /dʒɪ/, /ɪ/ et /e/ comme marques de pluralisation à l'oral dans la langue. Bref, cela ne montre aucune ressemblance au niveau des marques de pluralisation du nom entre nos deux langues d'étude.

### 3.2 Points de Dissemblances

Premièrement, il faut reconnaître ce processus d'alternance morphémique des suffixes de classes des noms en fulfulde qui n'est pas attesté en français. Celui de l'alternance de la consonne initiale qui est un autre processus de pluralisation à l'écrit très régulier en fulfulde est différent du français où cela ne se manifeste pas.



Un autre point de dissemblance au niveau du processus de pluralisation entre le français et le fulfulde est le fait d'avoir des classes nominales et leur utilisation pour réaliser la pluralité dans le cas du fulfulde. Autrement dit, nous comprenons jusqu'ici que le fulfulde est une langue à classes nominales et parmi les 25 classes de cette langue, certaines sont des classes qui aident à exprimer la pluralité. Donc il suffit ici d'identifier la classe du nom concerné et de savoir son homologue pour passer du singulier au pluriel. Mais on n'a pas des situations pareilles en français, étant donné qu'elle n'est pas une langue avec une telle caractéristique.

En bref, nous l'avons bien précisé jusqu'ici que le morphème 's' et ses variantes (x / Ø) selon le contexte sont les marques de pluralisation du français écrit. Par contre, nous constatons qu'il y a au moins neuf marques (-be, -de, -di, -ko, -koy/-kon, -en, -ji, -i et -e) de pluralisation à l'écrit en fulfulde. À partir de ces réalités, nous pourrions facilement conclure que les marques de pluralisation à l'écrit pour les noms dans les deux langues sont totalement différentes. Le nombre des marques en fulfulde est plus supérieur qu'en français.

À l'oral, ce processus important de liaison qui résulte à une marque -z en français est inconnu en fulfulde. À l'inverse, celui d'alternance de la consonne initiale qui par conséquence résulte à un changement de la prononciation à ce niveau en fulfulde est une situation également inconnue en français.

Nous l'avons également bien précisé qu'en fulfulde, on écrit comme on prononce dans presque toutes les situations. Cela veut dire que toutes les marques de pluralisation à l'écrit dans cette langue se manifestent également à l'oral. Ainsi, nous avons eu /be/, /de/, /di/, /kɔ/ ou /kɔn/, /kɔ/, /en/, /dʒɪ/, /ɪ/ et /e/ comme marques de pluralisation à l'oral en fulfulde. Par contre, la situation est le contraire en français, où la marque régulière -s à l'écrit ne se manifeste pas du tout à l'oral. Cela pour nous fait évidence que les marques de pluralisation sont entièrement différentes à l'oral entre le français et le fulfulde.

#### **4. Quelques Implications Pédagogiques**

En réalité, les conséquences pédagogiques de tous les points ci-dessus et même d'autres que nous n'avons pas détaillées, liées aux similitudes et dissimilitudes par rapport à l'opposition singulier/pluriel des noms dans nos deux langues sous étude constituent le point central d'un travail comme le nôtre. D'abord nous souhaitons préciser que cela concerne l'enseignant comme aussi l'enseigné. En fait nous convenons totalement avec le linguiste Ajiboye qui dit dans l'un de ses articles cité par Oshounniran (2008:138) que: «L'enseignement du français dans le milieu d'étude (exemple milieu peul) représente beaucoup de travail tant pour l'enseignant que pour l'enseigné». (La parenthèse nous appartient).

Pour nous, cette étude n'a vraiment pas à faire avec l'analyse des erreurs, mais a beaucoup à faire avec comment faciliter l'enseignement et/ou apprentissage de la pluralisation en français pour les fulbephones et/ou vice-versa. Ainsi, pour un enseignant du français aux apprenants fulbephones par exemple, à partir de ce travail, il doit commencer par bien expliquer ce qui fait la similarité et la divergence dans les processus et les marques de pluralisation des noms en français et en fulfulde. Par exemple, il pourra

bien démarrer le cours en expliquant le fait que dans les deux langues, on passe du singulier au pluriel par un ajout de suffixe pour les noms. Il doit identifier quelques morphèmes de suffixation pour réaliser le pluriel dans les deux langues, et donner des exemples. Mais en précisant que, tandis qu'on a besoin d'alterner un morphème par un autre en fulfulde pour former le pluriel, ce n'est pas le cas en français. Il peut se baser sur des cas et des exemples typiques qui se trouvent dans le corps de ce travail avec l'objectif de faciliter la compréhension de ses étudiants.

D'une manière générale, la situation actuelle en ce qui concerne l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues est que, leurs points de similitudes présentent l'avantage d'accélérer le processus d'intériorisation du concept chez les apprenants et constituent le point de référence pour atteindre ce but chez les enseignants. Mais, cet avantage doit être exploité avec beaucoup d'attention et une grande prudence pour éviter les dangers de sur-généralisation. Ajiboye, cité par Oshounniran (2008:143) tire notre attention à cette réalité:

... plus deux systèmes linguistiques se ressemblent plus ils ont tendance à mener à confusion. Au fait, on constate que c'est alors que les élèves sont conduits à sur-exploiter le côté facilitatif des correspondances au point que des erreurs sont inévitables.

Par contre, leurs points de dissimilitudes présentent le désavantage de constituer un obstacle au processus d'enseignement et d'apprentissage de la langue. Nous en déduisons donc que cette partie mérite beaucoup plus d'attention aux apprenants comme aussi aux enseignants des langues en général et du français aux fulbephones en particulier.

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## 37. Subject-Complement Agreement in Bassa

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In the past couple of decades, there has been an increasing interest in the study of agreement relations in syntactic theory (Chomsky 1992, 1995). In the Bassa language, modifiers do not just occur haphazardly, rather they are governed by the rule of agreement. This paper focuses on the rule of agreement between heads and their complements or modifiers in Bassa constructions. In Bassa, complements agree with their subjects or heads by taking on the morphosyntactic features or elements of the head noun.

### 1. Introduction

Subject agreement involves making the subject agree with the complement that modifies it for properties such as gender, number, and definiteness (Boij, 2005). Anderson (1995:104) quotes Barlow and Ferguson as saying that subject-complement agreement is a situation where “a grammatical element X matches a grammatical element Y in property Z within some grammatical configuration”. There are two ways inflection may be assigned, which are government and concord. Concord may be referred to as agreement. Concord or agreement occurs when an element in a phrase or sentence bears the morphosyntactic features of another element. Aronoff and Fudeman (2005) say “... one familiar examples of concord is noun-adjective agreement in the Romance languages or German. Adjectives take on the number and gender of the noun that they modify.” They report that in Kijamaat Joola, nouns trigger concord. “The adjectives that modify them must be like them in gender or noun class. Similarly, verbs in Kujamaat Joola reflect the noun class of their subject.

One of the ways to form this construction is to “form what appear to be adjectives attach a prefix of the form (C)V – to what Sapir calls a ‘neutral theme’ –, that is a stem that can be used as a noun, verb, adjective or adverb depending on context.” They report another instance of this inflectional phenomenon where the initial consonant of the prefix corresponds to the consonant of the noun class prefix. This they exemplify as follows:

- |   |    |                                    |                     |
|---|----|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | a. | Si- jamε- as      si      lumu –əs | ‘the European goat’ |
|   |    | 4CL goat-DEF4 4CL-European DEF4    |                     |
|   | b. | ε-      yεn e-      lulum          | ‘a European dog’    |
|   |    | 3CL- dog 3CL European              |                     |
|   | c. | e- be ε- nare                      | ‘a female cow’      |
|   |    | 3CL- Cow 3CL- woman                |                     |

In the foregoing examples the initial consonant of the prefix agrees with consonant noun class prefix.

Demonstratives also exhibit this grammatical category which have the form *uc* (ε), and particularizers, which have the forms *CV-kε* (n) (indefinite) and *CV – Kila* (definite), as shown below:

2. a. Si- jamɛn-as use 'these goats'  
4CL- goat DEF4 4DEM
- b. Ka- rɛg ku- kɛn 'a certain story'  
7CL- story 7CL PARTIC
- c. E- bə- y ε- kila 'the cow (of which I am talking)'  
3CL- cow- DEF3 3CL PARTRIC

(Source: Aronoff & Fudema 2005:176)

They report also that cardinal numbers up to 'four' and ordinals up to 'fifth' also agree with a head noun. This they exemplify still in *kujamaat Joola* as follows:

- 3 a. ε- yɛn yə- kon 'one dog'  
3CL- dog 3CL- one
- b. ɯ- bə:ru- ba:kir 'the forth tree'  
8CL- tree-8CL four
- c. ε- yɛn- εy ε- tɔŋɔndɛy 'the first dog'  
3CL dog DEF3 3CL – first
- d. Si- para:- s si- tɔkɛn- as 'the fifth monkey'  
4CL- monkey- DEF4 4CL – fyk- DEF4

Anfani (2003: 831) also reports instance of agreement in Hausa nominal constructions.

Examples:

- 4 a. gida n Bala 'Bala's house'  
house of
- b. Máatá r Ali 'wife of Ali'  
wife of
- c. Kâfa r Audu 'Audu's leg'  
leg of

---

|    |       |   |      |  |                     |
|----|-------|---|------|--|---------------------|
| d. | tauri | n | kai  |  | ‘strong headedness’ |
|    | hard  |   | head |  |                     |

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In this case, each genitival link has to agree with its head in person, number and gender.

## 2. Subject agreement making in Bassa

Agreement is a syntactic relationship between words which are compatible in a structure (Matthews, 2007:13). In the Bassa language, there is a relationship that exists between the head and its complement to mark number. The form of the noun requires a corresponding form, i.e. the head determines the form of its complement. Where the head (noun) is singular, it transfers its singular features to its complement and where the noun is plural; its complement is made to assimilate the traits of the noun. In a situation where the noun has more than two forms especially for nouns that have singular, paucal and plural, each inflectional form triggers a change of form of the complement in consonant with the form of the head noun.

### 2.1 Zero Affixation

This set of nouns has no overt or physical realization in the stream of speech symbolized by  $\emptyset$ . Most of such nouns are those with an initial /m/, /t/, /s/, /ʃ/, /tʃ/ sounds. They are invariable whether singular or plural.

Examples:

#### 5. /m/ Singular

- |    |          |                      |                |
|----|----------|----------------------|----------------|
| a. | meni     | <b>m</b> ’-òlatọ     | ‘sweet water’  |
|    | water    | Agr-sweet            |                |
| b. | màṇẹ̀bẹ̀ | <b>m</b> ’-ishì      | ‘black oil’    |
|    | oil      | Agr-black            |                |
| c. | mangai   | <b>m</b> -uhwaà      | ‘snake poison’ |
|    | poison   | Agr-snake            |                |
| d. | mòko     | <b>m</b> ’-èchẹ̀ṇjẹ̀ | ‘while gum’    |
|    | gum      | Agr-while            |                |

#### 6. /t/

- |    |          |            |                 |
|----|----------|------------|-----------------|
| a. | tàama    | tì-yèu     | ‘baby porridge’ |
|    | porridge | Agr-child  |                 |
| b. | tògbaà   | t-uwẹ̀wẹ̀  | ‘dog’s vomit’   |
|    | vomit    | Agr-dog    |                 |
| c. | tisèida  | tì-gesciya | ‘true witness’  |
|    | witness  | Agr-truth  |                 |



|        |                   |                         |                  |
|--------|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| d.     | tòlagwò<br>play   | tò-wẹ<br>Agr bad        | ‘bad joke’       |
| 7. /f/ |                   |                         |                  |
| a.     | shipà<br>soup     | sh-ùfo<br>Agr new       | ‘new soup’       |
| b.     | shibinya<br>ant   | sh-ìshenje<br>Agr-red   | ‘red ant’        |
| c.     | shìyibwò<br>cough | sh-ìkènyì<br>Agr strong | ‘stubborn cough’ |

In each of the examples above, each of the complement agrees with the noun head by assimilating its features.

## 2.2 -sh Prefix

The prefix **-sh** attaches to some nouns in order to pluralized them for number.

Examples:

|    |                 |                                     |                     |                                        |
|----|-----------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 8. | <i>Singular</i> |                                     | <i>Plural</i>       |                                        |
| a. | ákàrà<br>chair  | ò-fwo<br>Agr-new<br>‘new chair’     | shìkàrà<br>Pl chair | shì-fwo<br>Agr-new<br>‘new chairs’     |
| b. | alòmà<br>hen    | à-cẹnjẹ<br>Agr white<br>‘white hen’ | shalòmà<br>Pl-hen   | shẹ-cẹnjẹ<br>Agr-white<br>‘white hens’ |
| c. | akama<br>hook   | ù-fwo<br>Agr-new<br>‘new hook’      | shikama<br>Pl-hook  | sh-ùfwo<br>Agr-new<br>‘new hooks’      |
| d. | ùywa<br>year    | ò-ngwọshẹ<br>Agr-old<br>‘old year’  | shìywa<br>Pl-year   | shì-ngwọshẹ<br>Agr-old<br>‘old year’   |

In the foregoing examples, the singular noun conditions the features of its complement. Where the noun begins with a vowel sound, the complement selects a suitable vowel to agree with its head. The plural forms are prefixed with *sh-* where the complement also takes on it the form of the plural in order to mark agreement with its head.

### 2.3 Consonant Alternation

This set of nouns form their plural forms by altering the initial sound to the form suitable for plural number. In Bassa, the rule replaces or alters a voiced bilabial oral stop (/b/) and replaces it with a voiceless alveolar stop (/t/) for plurality. When a sentence is formed, each of the nouns condition the forms of complement endocentric to them by transferring their features to them thereby marking agreement. Examples:

- |    |                                                                                                |                                                                                                        |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9. | <i>Singular</i>                                                                                | <i>Plural</i>                                                                                          |
| a. | Bùngbongo <b>b</b> ẹ-zhẹmẹ<br>squash Agr-good<br>'Squash is good'                              | Tùgbongo <b>t</b> ẹ-zhẹmẹ<br>PL squash Agr-good<br>'Squashes are good'                                 |
| b. | Bùko <b>b</b> ù-fo bòo so<br>Plastic Agr-new 3sg buy<br>'S/he bought a new plastic'            | tùko <b>t</b> ù-fo bòo so<br>Pl plastic Agr-new 3sg buy<br>'S/he bought new plastic'                   |
| c. | Bò bẹrẹ bízhe <b>b</b> u-ko<br>3sg plant-Pst cotton Agr-one<br>'S/he planted a seed of cotton' | Bò bẹrẹ tízhe <b>t</b> -ùfugwo<br>3sg plant-Pst Pl-cotton Agr-many<br>'S/he planted many cotton seeds' |
| d. | Tu so bìneci <b>b</b> ì-biye<br>IPl buy-Pst engine Agr-good<br>'We bought a good engine'       | Tu so tìneci <b>t</b> ì-biye<br>IPL buy-pst Pl-engine Agr-good<br>'We bought good engines'             |
| e. | Bùzuzu <b>b</b> ì-tirì<br>rag Agr dirt<br>'a dirty rag'                                        | tùzuzu <b>t</b> ì-tirì<br>Pl rag Agr-dirt<br>'dirty rags'                                              |

In the foregoing examples the singular form which begins with a bilabial stop (/b/) conditions their complements to agree with them in place of articulation. The plural forms also which begin with an alveolar stop (/t/) conditions their complements to agree with them in place of articulation.

### 2.4 M/N Alternation/Internal Modification.

This process is applicable to nouns that begin with a high front vowel (/i/) which are always replaced with a bilabial nasal stop (/m/) but replaced by an alveolar nasal stop (/n/), if the following consonant is an alveolar or velar sound /b/, /k/, or /g/. Examples:

- |     |                                                                                        |                                                                                           |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10. | <i>Singular</i>                                                                        | <i>Plural</i>                                                                             |
| a.  | Bi sẹ ipepe <b>i</b> -kẹnyì<br>2sg buy-pst fan Agr-strong<br>'You bought a strong fan' | Bi sẹ mpopo <b>m</b> ò-kẹnyì<br>2sg buy-pst Pl-fan Agr-strong<br>'You bought strong fans' |

---

|                                                                                        |                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| b. Ibèlè <b>i</b> -ke <b>i</b> -nàmba<br>cat Agr-one Agr-present<br>'There is one cat' | mbolo <b>mi</b> -yebi <b>mọ</b> -nàmba<br>cat Agr-two Agr-present<br>'There are two cats'    |
| c. Ìkpèsọ <b>i</b> -zaba-o<br>star Agr-present-Neg<br>'There is no star'               | mkpaso <b>mọ</b> -zaba-o<br>Pl-star Agr-present-Neg<br>'There are no stars'                  |
| d. Ìtímẹ gẹ i-gembi<br>farm dem Agr-big<br>'This farm is large'                        | Ìtọma <b>mọ</b> -ga <b>mọ</b> -gemenji<br>Pl-farm Agr-Dem Agr-big<br>'these farms are large' |

In the foregoing the singular form i.e. high front vowels select front vowel to agree with, whereas the plural form usually an alveolar nasal or a bilabial nasal selects a bilabial nasal to agree with at the complement position.

## 2.5 Suppletion

Suppletion refers to a relationship existing between morphemes through a general rule, because the forms involve different roots. The inflectional rule uses unrelated forms or different rules (Crystal, 2008:466). The rule of agreement transfers the traits of the head to its complement. Examples:

| 11 Singular                                                   | Plural                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| a. Bọtò <b>b</b> -úko<br>person Agr one<br>'one person'       | atwà <b>é</b> -yèbi<br>Pl-person Agr-two<br>'two persons'    |
| b. yèu <b>yè</b> -yi<br>child Agr-male<br>'a male child'      | mianwọ <b>mè</b> -yi<br>children Agr-male<br>'male children' |
| c. bọswọ <b>bì</b> -shì<br>bee Agr-back<br>'black bee'        | ẹswẹ <b>ì</b> -shì<br>Pl-bee Agr-black<br>'black bees'       |
| d. bùswa <b>bì</b> -shenje<br>rat Agr-red<br>'red (bush) rat' | ìswẹ <b>ì</b> -shenje<br>Pl-rat Agr-red<br>'red rats'        |

Each of the forms selects the form that is compatible with it, showing agreement in place and manner of articulation.

## 2.6 Elision

Elision is a term usually used in phonetics and phonology which refers to the omission of sounds. Both consonants and vowels may be affected and sometimes a whole syllable may be elided. In connected speech in English for example unstressed grammatical such as *and* and *of* are particularly prone to elision. For *of* or is dropped in a structure such as ‘cup of tea’ (cuppa tea), or *a* and *d* are dropped in “boys ‘n’ girls” within polysyllabic words, the vowels and consonants in unstressed syllable usually get elided “in conversational speech of normal speed, e.g. *camera* (/‘kamrə/), *probably* (/‘prɒbli/), *February* (/‘febrɪ/)” (Crystal, 2008:166). In Bassa, rules of plural formation, elision in one of the diverse rules used to form plurality. In a conventional speech, or connected speech, the singular and plural forms condition what forms their complements take in order to show agreement.

Examples:

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>12. <i>Singular</i></p> <p>a. bwolo    <b>b</b>-òyikwo<br/>          husband Agr-wives<br/>          ‘the bride groom’</p> <p>b. bishi <b>b</b>ì-shiì<br/>          fly Agr-black<br/>          ‘black fly’</p> <p>c. bòzagwò <b>b</b>ò-kapá<br/>          grain Agr-beans<br/>          ‘a grain of beans’</p> <p>d. bòjala <b>b</b>à-shamwà<br/>          hunter Agr-monkeys<br/>          ‘a hunter of monkeys’</p> <p>e. bòjanà <b>b</b>ù-lomù<br/>          fish Agr-fresh<br/>          ‘fresh fish’</p> | <p><i>Plural</i></p> <p>olwo    <b>ò</b>-yikwo<br/>          husband Pl-Agr-wives<br/>          ‘bride grooms’</p> <p>ishi    <b>ì</b>-shiì<br/>          Pl-fly Agr-black<br/>          ‘black flies’</p> <p>izęgwè    <b>ì</b>-kẹpẹ<br/>          pl-grain Agr-beans<br/>          ‘grains of beans’</p> <p>àjala        <b>à</b>-shamwà<br/>          pl-hunter Agr-Pl-monkey<br/>          ‘hunters of monkeys’</p> <p>ịjẹnè    <b>ì</b>-lomù<br/>          Pl-fish Agr lomù<br/>          ‘fresh fish(es)’</p> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

In the foregoing examples, the singular forms begin with a bilabial oral stop (/b/) and therefore triggers an agreement marker that also begins with a bilabial oral stop, whereas the plural forms begin with vowel sounds which also select complement forms that agree with them in manner and place of articulation.

### 2.7 Replacive process (vowel alternation)

This process replaces or modifies only the vocalic segments of nouns and leaves the consonants stable, i.e. to inflect a noun for number, the vowels are modified but the consonants subsist. Examples:

| 13. Singular                                                | Plural                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| a. ɔ'wɔ'wɔ      ù-hwòò<br>tree      Agr dry<br>'a dry tree' | è'wẹ'wẹ      ì-hwòò<br>pl-tree      Agr-dry<br>'try trees' |
| b. ùsepi ù-latò<br>thorn Agr-sharp<br>'a sharp thorn'       | èsepi à-latò<br>Pl-thorn Agr-sharp<br>'sharp thorns'       |
| c. òkwà ò-'wɔɔ<br>fish Agr-big<br>'big fish'                | àkwà à-'wɔɔ<br>fish Agr-big<br>'big fish(es)'              |
| d. ùkogo ù-rubu<br>roof Agr-barn<br>'barn roof'             | òkogo ò-rubu<br>Pl-roof Agr-barn<br>'barn roofs'           |

The foregoing examples also agree in the place and manner of articulation, although for this set there are particular subsets of nouns whose agreement may have absolute precision of manner and place of articulation but a very close approximation for others.

Examples:

|                                                             |                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 14a. ùwapà ò-'wɔɔ<br>forest Agr-big<br>'a thick forest'     | àwapà à-'wɔɔ<br>Pl-forest Agr-big<br>'thick forests'       |
| b. ò'wɔ'wɔ      ù-hwòò<br>tree      Agr-dry<br>'a dry tree' | è'wẹ'wẹ      ì-hwòò<br>Pl-tree      Agr-dry<br>'dry trees' |

### 2.8 Paucal Inflection/Paucity

Paucity refers to smallness of quality or fewness. Nouns in this category have three forms: singular, paucal (small number opposed to a large number) and plural (many). Matthews (2007:157) refers to this situation to as trial number in some languages marking nouns that refer to sets of three (or a small number). In Bassa, this can be exemplified, as follows:

| 15. <i>Singular</i>                                             | <i>Paucal</i>                                                      | <i>Plural</i>                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| a. <b>ri-nè rè-cẹnjẹ</b><br>Sg-tooth Agr white<br>'white tooth' | <b>e-nè à-cẹnjẹ</b><br>PAUC-tooth Agr-white<br>'white teeth (few)' | <b>shi-nè shè-cẹnjẹ</b><br>Pl-tooth Agr-white<br>'white teeth (many)' |
| b. <b>ri-shè rì-biye</b><br>Sg-eye Agr-good<br>'good eye'       | <b>e-shè e-biye</b><br>PAUC-eye Agr good<br>'good eyes (few)'      | <b>shi-shè shì-biye</b><br>Pl-eye Agr-good<br>'good eyes (many)'      |
| c. <b>ù-kàraba ù-latò</b><br>Sg-maie Agr-sweet<br>'sweet maize' | <b>à-kàraba à-latò</b><br>PAUC-maize Agr-sweet<br>'sweet maize'    | <b>shì-kàraba shì-latò</b><br>Pl-maize Agr-sweet<br>'sweet maize'     |
| d. <b>ù-wamբẹ ù-gwepì</b><br>leave Agr itch<br>'itching leave'  | <b>a-mbè è-gwepì</b><br>PAUC-leave Agr-itch<br>'itching leaves'    | <b>shẹ-mbè shì-gwepì</b><br>Pl-leave Agr itch<br>'itching leaves'     |

In the foregoing discussion, elements do not just occur haphazardly nor is their selection done arbitrarily. Each noun in each of the noun phrases or sentences structure dictates to its complement the form to take which must be compatible with noun head and also bears it features such as phonetic similarity (place and manner of articulation). Thus, complements in Bassa do not have stable phonetic features as they are dictated by the noun head in order to show agreement.



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## **38. The Structure of the Noun Phrase in English and Kambari**

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This paper examines the distribution and interpretation of the various canonical NP types in English and Kambari\*. This is done with a view to compare and contrast their identifiable morphosyntactic properties within the framework of binding theory as outlined by Chomsky (1981). The study owes its motivation to the fact that comparison across languages is an essential aspect of formal linguistics as suggested by Cinque and Kaynes (2005). In particular, it has proven useful in illuminating relations between cross-linguistic syntactic differences that might otherwise appear unrelated and has often helped to identify core principles of Universal Grammar. Although English and Kambari are from different language phyla, the NPs appear to pattern in the same way in many respects. We argue that both languages satisfy the same binding conditions encoded in the classical binding theory. Despite these appearances, there are areas of divergence, which perhaps follow from their morphology. In spite of the fact that their reflexives are both bimorphemic, English differs from Kambari in three respects. First, anaphors in English agree in person, number and gender in contrast with Kambari where anaphors (reflexives) agree with their antecedents only in person and number but not in gender, since it lacks gender distinction. Second, Kambari displays, contrary to English, what appears *prima facie* to be double antecedents, somewhat an unconventional morphological property whose grammatical role is at present unclear. Finally, empirical evidence has shown that contrary to English, reciprocals are nonexistent in Kambari.

### **1. General Introduction**

The focus of this study is to draw areas of parallelism or otherwise between English and Kambari noun phrases with respect to their distribution and interpretation in the light of Binding Theory, a sub-module of Government and Binding Theory proposed by Chomsky (1981, 1986 and subsequent work). Comparison across languages is an essential aspect of formal linguistics as suggested by Cinque & Kayne (2005). They further argued that the study of closely related languages or dialects or even unrelated ones has proven extremely useful in illuminating relations between cross-linguistic syntactic differences that might otherwise appear unrelated, and has helped to identify the core principles of Universal Grammar, hence the present study is an attempt in this direction. Basically, therefore the main aim of this study is to compare the application of the binding theory in English and Kambari within the GB framework as outlined in Chomsky (1981, 1986b). First and foremost, this study owes its motivation to the fact

that, to the best of our knowledge, the application of the Binding Theory in English and Kambari has not been addressed. More so, a study of this nature is also motivated by the fact that it demonstrates the extent to which syntactic theories can be generalized to languages other than English or those languages where such theories emanate from. Various structures have been studied in the literature on a comparative note (see Rizzi (1982), Kayne (1984) and Picallo (1984) among others). In this work, focus has been on the three major classes of noun phrases that have been used in comparative studies of this nature namely, Referring expressions or Full lexical NPs, Pronominals and Anaphors. Our tasks here are basically triad. First, an attempt has been made to identify the form and functions of the three major categories of NPs in the two languages. Secondly their distributions and interpretations have been determined. Thirdly, their points of similarities and contrasts has been established vis-à-vis the theoretical implications thereof within the general framework of Principles and Parameters Approach to the study of human language.

Although, English and Kambari are from different language phyla (English, a West Germanic branch of the Indo-European family of languages; whereas, Kambari is classified as Niger-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Kainji, Western-Kainji, Kambari Group, (Crozier and Blench (1992: 62)), yet the NPs appear to pattern in the same way in many respects. Anticipating our discussion in the sections below, we argue that both languages satisfy the same binding conditions encoded in the classical binding theory. However, this might not be unconnected with the fact that they both exhibit the same basic configurational pattern, SVO. The paper is structured along the following lines. Section 1 contains some general considerations. A concise overview of the Binding theory is presented in section 2. Section 3 deals with the comparative analysis of the NPs in English and Kambari in the light of the Binding theoretic constructs. Concluding remarks and direction for future research is the subject matter of section 4.

### **1.1 The Point of Departure**

A comparative study across human languages is a very robust area of study especially within the theoretical framework of Universal Grammar advocated by Chomsky and those who subscribe with him. According to Cinque & Kayne (2005), comparative studies have grown to the point where a reference work is needed to comprehensively explain the state of the field and make its results more widely known, thus the present study is an attempt to partly fulfill this need. The study of NP structure is not new in the literature. Several studies focused on different facets of NP cross-linguistically within the confines of Government and Binding Theory. However, there are few works that considered the distribution and interpretation of NPs on a comparative note between two or more languages especially between English and African languages. This further, underscores why we undertake the present study.

Haegeman (1999) pointed out that the development of generative syntax in the last three or so decades witnessed one important tendency which she termed “a marked return to comparative approaches”. According to her, the goal of the comparative approaches in the generative tradition is psychological, i.e. that of accounting for the knowledge of

language. In order to determine how a specific language (say English or Kambari) is acquired and how knowledge in general is acquired, we have to determine to what extent the properties of languages vary from one language to another. Differently put, to what extent they are invariant across languages and its parameters postulated to explain cross-linguistic variation. The comparative study of languages has revealed that the properties with respect to which languages vary tend to organize themselves in clusters which are stable across languages and which allow to arrive at a typology of languages (Haegeman 1999:19). Hence, this serves as a launching-pad for this modest research.

## 2. Binding Theory: A Concise Overview

This section examines the treatment of binding phenomenon in the generative grammar framework. We will not give an exhaustive summary of generative approaches to binding but will rather concentrate on the classical Chomskyan approach ignoring for the moment the other approach which differs slightly from the former in its empirical coverage. The latter is the geometrical theory of binding advocated within the Government and Binding (GB/Principles & Parameters (P&P) framework of (Chomsky, 1980, et al.), presumably the most well known approach to binding of all, the former is the semantically grounded binding theory of Reinhart & Reuland (1991, et al.) which is possibly the most oft-cited alternative. I will also forgo any discussion of the formulations in non-GB syntactic frameworks such as LFG and HPSG, even though Everaert (2001) largely downplays the differences on a comparative note. Given the breadth of binding-theoretic research, many key issues cannot be addressed here. We simply adopt a narrowly syntactic focus on binding theory, and largely disregard the morphology and semantics of pronominals and anaphors. In particular, long-distance anaphors which challenge the tripartization of NPs suggested in Chomsky (1981) is beyond the present discussion. Binding theory, by definition straddles the syntax-semantics interface (cf. Truswell 2014:215) and of course there exist a robust semantic literature on anaphora (see Evans 1980 for foundational work, and Buring 2005: for a recent introduction).

The classical Chomskyan approach to binding phenomena is formulated in his *Binding Theory* (henceforth BT) (Chomsky 1980, 1981, 1982, 1986). The formulation of BT presented here is most closely based on Chomsky (1981) being the most standard variant and perhaps the canonical approach. Several revised versions of BT have been proposed in the literature on diverse grounds (cf. e.g, Chomsky (1986), as well as the reductionist approaches of Manzini (1983), Bouchard (1984), and Burzio (1989), inter alia, or the expansionist revisions of Lasnik (1989) and later Thrainsson (1991)). It is beyond the scope of this work to introduce or debate the details of these issues, though. BT is conceived to be a module of grammar that specifies specific configurational constraints on various categories of NPs and thus regulates the referential properties of those NPs. Specifically, BT is responsible for the regulation of relations between NPs in bound argument positions, (i.e., '*A-positions*') and their binders. In this connection, BT is a theory of *A-binding*, where the relevant definitions are given in (1) below. Again a caveat here is in order. We declined to include any discussion of non-overt NPs postulated in the GB or other generative grammar frameworks and also forgo

consideration of the issues surrounding them, since these fall outside the scope of our inquiry (for a critical discussion of null anaphora in the generative grammar framework, see Huang (2000, 50-90), who also suggests detailed pragmatic alternatives to these analyses in several works, (Huang 1994, 2000, et al.)). The standard variant binding mechanism and constraints include the following:

(1a) *(A-) Binding*

- $\alpha$  (*A*) binds  $\beta$  iff
- a.  $\alpha$  is in an A-position
  - b.  $\alpha$  c-commands  $\beta$
  - c.  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  are coindexed.

(1b) *C-command*

- $\alpha$  c-commands  $\beta$  iff
- a.  $\alpha$  does not dominate  $\beta$
  - b.  $\beta$  does not dominate  $\alpha$
  - c. the first branching node dominating  $\alpha$  also dominates  $\beta$ .

BT is principally concerned with the distribution and interpretation of NPs in a sentence, determining the situation in which they can co-refer or must be co-indexed with other NPs. According to Horrocks (1987), for the purposes of the BT, NPs that are arguments are assumed to fall into one of the three categories as in (4) below:

- (2a) (i) Anaphors (reflexives and reciprocals)  
 (ii) Pronominals  
 (iii) Referring Expressions or Full Lexical NPs

Non-argument NPs, such as expletive *it* and existential *there* are outside the system. Traditionally, there are three principles on which BT is organized otherwise known as Binding Conditions A, B and C each addresses and regulates the distribution and interpretation of each of the NPs identified above. Chomsky (1982, 78-89) argues that the notions *Anaphor*, *Pronoun*, and *R-expression* are not syntactic primitives, but can rather be characterized in terms of two primitive, binary features  $\pm$  Anaphoric and  $\pm$  Pronominal, where the distribution of features for overt NPs is as below.

| (2b) |                   | <i>R- expressions</i> | <i>Pronouns</i> | <i>Anaphors</i> |
|------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|      | <i>Pronominal</i> | -                     | +               | -               |
|      | <i>Anaphoric</i>  | -                     | -               | +               |

The BT can then be formulated in terms of the feature specifications for the distinct NP types. According to Giorgi & Longobardi (1991: 16), such a tripartition of nominal expressions follows from the interaction of two binary features:  $\pm$ *anaphoric* and

$\pm$ *pronominal*. The combination of the positive value for both features cannot correspond to a lexical item, due to independent considerations concerning Government and Case theory (Giorgi & Longobardi; *ibid*). In Standard Binding Theory (Chomsky, 1981) anaphors and pronominals are in complementary distribution within their binding domain.

(2c) *Binding Principles*

*Principle A:* An NP with the feature specification +Anaphoric must be bound in its governing category.

*Principle B:* An NP with the feature specification +Pronominal must be free in its governing category.

*Principle C:* An NP with the features – Anaphoric and – Pronominal must be free everywhere.

Principles A through C heavily rest on the notion of a relevant local domain also known as ‘governing category’, which is in turn contingent on the notions of ‘government’ and ‘accessible subject/SUBJECT’, specified thus:

(2d) *Governing Category (GC)*

The *governing category* of  $\beta$  is the minimal domain containing

- a.  $\beta$
- b. a governor of  $\beta$
- c. an accessible subject/SUBJECT for  $\beta$ .

(2e) *Government*

$\alpha$  governs  $\beta$  iff

- a.  $\alpha$  does not dominate  $\beta$
- b. the lowest maximal projection that dominates  $\alpha$  also dominates  $\beta$
- c. there is no maximal projection (of a lexical head) between  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ .

*subject/SUBJECT*

- a. subject: NP in [Spec, XP]
- b. SUBJECT corresponds to finite AGR.

(2g) *Accessible subject/SUBJECT*

$\alpha$  is an accessible subject/SUBJECT for  $\beta$  if the coindexation of  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  does not violate any grammatical principles.

### 3. On the Distribution and Interpretation of NPs in English and Kambari

Following Chomsky (1980, 1981, 1982, 1986), Haegeman (1994), Pollard, Carl and Ivan A. Sag (1992), we assume that Binding Theory regulates the distribution and



interpretation of noun phrases in both English and Kambari, subcategorizing them into three distinct sub types: Anaphors, Pronominals and R-expressions. Preliminary investigation has shown that both English and Kambari NP distribution exhibit similar patterns with very few areas of contrasts. Though Kambari lacks reciprocals and gender distinction, yet both languages exhibit similar pronominal system, and they display the SVO order. Consider the following:

- |    |    |                                      |                                         |
|----|----|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 4. | a  | N ca yi ta atagada. (Kambari)        | 1' a. she gave him some money (English) |
|    |    | ‘I gave her the books’               |                                         |
|    | b. | Me ene ta unusu wa aciyava.          | b. they blamed themselves               |
|    |    | I saw sin of myself ‘I blame myself’ |                                         |
|    | c. | U ~asa ta aciyayi.                   | c. he killed himself.                   |
|    |    | ‘She slapped herself’                |                                         |

Since the purpose of this study is to examine the structure of NPs in English and Kambari with the view to bring out to the limelight areas of similarities and contrasts within the purview of Binding Theory, it may not be out of place if we make some preliminary remarks regarding their overall composition in the light of the theory. We will first look at the distribution and interpretation of NPs in Kambari. Secondly, we consider these binding facts vis-à-vis those exhibited in English. We scrutinize the claims made in the above binding formulations. We begin with Anaphors.

### 3.1 Anaphors

Languages contain a class of NPs that are called anaphors. These are elements that have no independent reference, but depend on an antecedent for their interpretation. Anaphor is an NP that obligatorily gets its meaning from another NP in the sentence. Every anaphor in English and Kambari must have a coindexed, c-commanding antecedent NP within the same (root) sentence. The classical case of anaphoric elements in English is reflexive pronouns (myself, yourself, himself, themselves, etc.) and reciprocals like (each other, one another). It has commonly been assumed that a single generalization determines the possible antecedents of anaphors (reflexives and reciprocal expressions) in human languages. But the transformations proposed by Lees & Klima (1963), the rules of interpretation formulated by Jackendoff (1972), and Principle A of Chomsky’s (1981, 1986) binding theory are all attempts to provide a unified account of the binding properties of anaphors in languages. Basically, anaphors subsume reflexives and reciprocals. These we consider in turn.

#### 3.1.1 Reflexives

English and Kambari reflexives are bimorphemic; the former apparently consist of pronoun + *self* and the latter consist of *self* + accusative pronoun. The pronominal part of the reflexive in English must agree in person, number and gender with its antecedent, the *self*-part only agrees in number. However, the pronominal part in Kambari agrees in number and person, it lacks gender distinction. A reflexive must be coreferential with

another NP in the same sentence for both English and Kambari, but English NPs must agree with its antecedent in person, number and gender (not case). Thus, agreement in person and number is obligatory in Kambari but not gender. The table below demonstrates the composition of English and Kambari reflexives:

Table 3.1

| (5) ENGLISH      | KAMBARI          |
|------------------|------------------|
| myself           | aciya <u>va</u>  |
| ourselves        | aciya <u>tsu</u> |
| himself/ herself | aciya <u>yi</u>  |
| themselves       | aciyele          |
| yourself         | aciya <u>wu</u>  |
| yourselves       | aciya <u>lu</u>  |
| each other       | aciyele/‘yuwalai |
| one another      | aciya <u>tsu</u> |

Reflexives seem to differ from pronominals in that they cannot be used in a sentence unless there is another coreferential NP in the sentence as in these examples:

- (6) a. **Esheli’i** a ciga ta **aciyele**.  
 Girls the they like/love CM themselves  
 ‘The girls like themselves’
- b. **Peshe** kalyuwa ta **aciya<sub>y</sub>i** a masukaci’i.  
 Peshe watch S.pro CM herself in mirror the  
 ‘Peshe watches herself in the mirror’
- c. **U**i tsulaa ta **aciya<sub>y</sub>i** buku va agujiya.  
 S/he buy.Past CM her/himself bag of groundnuts  
 ‘S/he bought her/himself a bag of groundnuts’.

These examples are accounted for within Chomsky's binding theory by Principle A, which requires that a (governed) anaphor be A-bound (coindexed with a c-commanding NP in an argument position) within a suitably defined minimal syntactic domain (Chomsky 1981). In (6a), *Esheli’i* is coindexed with *aciyele*, and therefore *aciyele* is c-commanded and bound by the antecedent *Esheli’i*. Whereas (6b) denotes the same indices between *Peshe* and *aciya<sub>y</sub>i* which made them to corefer to each other. *Acia<sub>y</sub>i* is bound and c-commanded by the antecedent, its governor. Same can be said in respect of (6c) where the indices are the same, and we have an instance of coreferentiality between ‘u and *aciya<sub>y</sub>i*’.

Analogously, English reflexives pattern in the same way as Kambari reflexives do, with a difference in gender agreement as the following examples below show, (taken from Black 1998):

- (7) a. **Sue<sub>i</sub>** likes **herself<sub>i</sub>**  
 b. **Sally** believed that Max disliked her/\*herself.  
 c. **Sally** believed that she/ \*herself would succeed.  
 d. That we had seen Sally in the street amazed her/\*herself.

The basic generalization that can be deduced from this data is that first, Reflexive Pronouns must corefer with some NP before them in the sentence, thus in (7a), *Sue* is coindexed with *herself*, thus c-commanded by *Sue*. There is an agreement in number, person and gender in this instance. Example (7b) shows that the ungrammaticality of the construction is that the anaphor is too far from its antecedent. Second, there is a locality condition for this coreferential relationship, examples (7c-d) suggest that the antecedent, which is the NP that the reflexive corefers with, must be within the same minimal clause (=CP) as the reflexive.

Consider what follows in example (8) below:

- (8) **Langashi<sub>i</sub>** ene ta **aciyayi<sub>i</sub>**.  
 Langashi see.Pst CM himself  
 'Langashi saw himself'.

In this example, '*aciyayi*' a reflexive corefer to its antecedent in number and person in Kambari. '*Aciyayi*' is not free in its binding domain, therefore bound to its antecedent '*Langashi*', because they are coindexed and the reflexive '*aciyayi*' is c-commanded by the NP '*Langashi*'. Having examined the distribution of reflexives in both languages, we now turn to reciprocals.

### 3.1.2 Reciprocals

These are also anaphors in English but absent in Kambari, and thus subject to principle A, and to the agreement requirements. A reciprocal requires an antecedent that is plural as in the following examples in English (due to Haegemen 1994:223) illustrate. Note that the ungrammaticality of (9b) is due to failure of the antecedent to satisfy the agreement requirement of the reciprocal:

- (9) a. The *students* attacked *each other*  
 b. \*The *student* attacked *each other*

The relation between *The students* and *each other* in (9a) is one of anaphora, or referential dependence. Where possible, we indicate anaphoric relations with italics.

However, in Kambari there is absence of reciprocals comparable to English ones. Instead, reflexives are used to have the same effect, as demonstrated by the following:

- (9') a. *a* cǝgalai tǝ ***aciyele***.  
 They like CM each other  
 'They like each other'.
- b. *muwun* m makaranta'a n ***'yuwalai*** tǝ.  
 Children of school the they hate each other CM  
 'The students hate each other'.
- c. *tsu* 'yuwalai tǝ ***acyatsu***.  
 We hate CM one another  
 'We hate one another'.

The reflexives that are used to achieve the desired reciprocity in bold italics in (9'a-c) agree with their antecedents in number and person. The antecedents (*a*, *muwun*, and *tsu*) are all plurals. *A* is 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural form, *muwun* is personal pronoun plural, and *tsu* is 1<sup>st</sup> person plural form. The anaphors discussed in the preceding section differ significantly from pronominals which constitute another subset of NPs. This we consider presently.

### 3.2 Pronominals

This is another type of NP. These are NPs that can optionally get their meaning from another NP in the sentence, but may also optionally get it from somewhere else (including context or previous sentences in the discourse). Pronominal is an NP that may (but need not) get its meaning from another word in the sentence. These NPs are called pronouns or pronominals and they seem to be in complementary distribution with reflexives (Lees & Klima 1963). Thus, we can account for the distribution of pronominals by requiring them to satisfy a condition in contrast to that which anaphors need to satisfy, as we shall see shortly. Below are the pronominals in English and Kambari:

Table 3.2

| <b>ENGLISH</b>         |                 |               | <b>KAMBARI</b>  |               |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <u>NOMINATIVE FORM</u> |                 |               |                 |               |
|                        | <i>Singular</i> | <i>Plural</i> | <i>Singular</i> | <i>Plural</i> |
| 1 <sup>st</sup>        | i               | we            | n, me, amu      | tsu           |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>        | you             | you           | mu/avu/vu       | a]u           |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>        | he/she/it       | they          | wu/ u           | a/ e          |
| <u>ACCUSATIVE FORM</u> |                 |               |                 |               |
|                        | <i>Singular</i> | <i>Plural</i> | <i>Singular</i> | <i>Plural</i> |
| 1 <sup>st</sup>        | me              | us            | mu              | tsu           |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>        | your            | your          | wu              | ]u            |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>        | him/ her        | them          | yi              | le/ ele       |

Anaphors are not the only NP type with restrictions on their syntactic position. Pronominals are constrained in certain ways. Consider the construction in (10) below:

- (10) a. **E** ene ta n'utsa n le.  
They see.Pst. CM friends of them  
'They saw their friends'.
- b. **A** ca yi ta ikebe.  
They give.Pst. him/her CM money  
'They gave him/her some money'.
- (11) a. **Wu** una yi ta.  
S/he kill.Pst. her/him CM  
'S/he killed her/him'.
- b. **Wu** una ta aciyayi.  
S/he kill.Pst. CM her/himself  
'S/he killed her/himself'.
- (12) a. **U** damma ta u ta kamba.  
S/he say.Pst CM s/he will.Pst. go back  
'S/he said that s/he would go back'.
- b. **U** kambuwa mu ta mota.  
S/he return.Pst. me CM car  
'S/he returned the car to me'.
- c. **U** yuwan wu ta.  
S/he speak.Pst. to you CM  
'S/he spoke to you'.
- (13) **Me** ene ta unusu wa aciyava.  
I see.Pst. CM sin of myself  
'I blame myself'.
- (14) **N** ca yi ta atagada.  
I give.Pst. her/him CM books  
'I gave her/him the books'.

It should be noted that the Kambari language lacks gender distinction, as can be seen in the above examples, and its pronominals are quite distinct from that of English. The third person plural form in Kambari should either be 'e' or 'a', this is determined by the verb the pronoun antecedes. In examples (10a-b), the difference is that of phonology, the

pronoun ‘*e*’ precedes any verb that begins with a vowel sound and there is a glide in its production and/or articulation, while the pronoun ‘*a*’ precede verbs that begin with a consonant sound. The Kambari third person singular form behaves exactly the same way as its plural counterpart. The pronoun ‘*wu*’ in (11a-b) comes before a verb that begins with a vowel sound and there is a glide in its articulation, as in the case of example (10a-b), while the pronoun ‘*u*’ in (12a-c) comes before any vowel that begins with a consonant sound. The first person singular pronoun ‘*me*’ and ‘*n*’ exhibit similar pattern with respect to the third person plural form. ‘*me*’ comes before a verb that begins with a vowel sound and there is a glide in its articulation, and ‘*n*’ comes before a verb that begins with a consonant as examples (13-14) show. Restriction of NPs in there syntactic position is a property of pronominals, which is also evident in Kambari.

Similarly, English patterns the same way with Kambari as can be seen in the examples due to (Akmajian et al, 2001:206) below:

- (15) a. **Nicholas** left after **he** found the tricycle.  
 b. **He** left after **Nicholas** found the tricycle.  
 c. After **he** found the tricycle, **Nicholas** left.

In (15a) *Nicholas* and *he* can easily be understood as referring to the same person. This contrasts with (15b), where *he* and *Nicholas* are presumed to be different people. One difference between (15a) and (15b) is the order of the two noun phrases. In (15a) *Nicholas* precedes *he* and in (15b) *he* precedes *Nicholas*. But does linear order account for the difference? (15c) provides evidence that order cannot be the answer. In (15c) *he* precedes *Nicholas* and yet they can be interpreted as referring to the same individual. Even though the pronoun *he* precedes the noun phrase *Nicholas* in both cases, only in (15b) does *he* appear ‘higher’ in the tree than *Nicholas*. Specifically, in (15b) the pronoun c-commands the noun, but in (15c) it does not. Similarly, the same can be seen in the following Kambari examples:

- (16) **Mogono’o** ca **yi** ta ikebe.  
 King the give.Pst. him/her CM money  
 ‘The king gave him/her some money’.
- (17) **Mogono’o** una **yi** ta.  
 King the kill.Pst. him/her CM  
 ‘The king killed him/her’.
- (18) **Mogono’o** ca **yi** ta atagada.  
 King the give.Pst. him/her CM books  
 ‘The king gave him/her the books’.

Pronouns like *yi* in sentences (16-18) are not bound. (They are not coindexed by a c-commanding NP.) The sentences in (16-18) may only have the meaning where *yi* refers to someone other than *Mogono’o*. Unlike the case of anaphors, (which *must* be bound in a particular configuration), pronouns seem only to have a limitation on where they *cannot*



be bound. That is, a pronoun cannot be bound by an antecedent that is a clause-mate (in the same immediate clause). You'll notice that this is exactly the opposite of where anaphors are allowed. This restriction is called *Principle B* of the binding theory. It makes use of the term *free*. *Free* is the opposite of bound. The pronoun must be free within its binding domain. We now turn to the last but not the least distinct NP type, R-expressions.

### 3.3 R-expressions (Full Lexical NPs)

R-expressions or Full Lexical NPs are those that get their meaning by referring to an entity in the world. R-expressions have yet another separate distribution. R-expressions don't seem to allow any instances of binding at all, not within the binding domain and not outside it either, (Carnie, 2007). R-expressions occur in a proper subset of the environments which allow pronouns, thus, Full Lexical NPs are free, independent elements. R-expressions in Chomsky (1981) are typically referentially independent, and descriptively richer than reflexives, reciprocals, or pronouns, given the fact that R-expressions do not exhibit coreferential relations. One might think that while pronouns and anaphors might vary from one language to another, names and descriptions and other R-expressions are probably basically the same in all languages, at least with respect to their binding properties. The constraint that regulates the distribution of R-expressions is called *Principle C*.

Notice that Principle C says nothing about a binding domain. Essentially R-expressions must be free everywhere. They cannot be bound at all. We return to this in the sections below (3.1-5). In Kambari, as it is the case in English, R-expressions are cannot be bound, as is instantiated in the following sentences:

- (19) **Ango** damma ta u ta yuwusan majiyan **Fatima** ciga yi ta.  
 Ango say.Pst. CM he is do.Pr.cont. think.Pr.cnt. Fatima like.Pst. him CM  
 'Ango said he thought that Fatima liked him.'

In (19) above, the Kambari R-expressions *Ango* and *Fatima*, occur in a proper subset of the environments which allow pronouns as an independent element. *Fatima* is not bound by *Ango*, each is free. There is no distinction in the form of English and Kambari NPs in this instance, unlike what occurs in the following example (20) below:

- (20) **Esheli'i** a ciga ta aciyele.  
 Girls the they like CM themselves  
 'The girls like themselves.'

Here again, the NP *Esheli'i* is free and similar to its English counterpart, *the girls* in the gloss. The only contrast in the form is that of morphology, where the 'determiner' is fused with the noun, *Esheli'i* 'Girls the' (*Esheli*-Girls and '*i*-the). This shows the form of the Kambari NP in contrast to that which obtains in English. Again, consider (21) below:

- (21) **Muwu'un** n gasa ta yanji a juma e le.  
 Children the they harvest CM millet at farm of them  
 'The children harvest the millet in their farm'.

The R-expression in example (21) shows that it is free and the determiner is equally fused with the noun. The form is not similar to that of English because the determiner and noun in English are two separate entity ( *the children* ) in contrast to Kambari R-expression where it is fused together as in *muwu'un* (= children the), there is a morphological difference in the form of the two languages. It should be noted that English morphology appears to be analytic whereas Kambari displays to certain degree synthetic morphology as seen in example (21). Consider example (22) below:

- (22) A jangwa ta **Kovi** woo o'wo **mogono'o** mo Auna.  
 They chose CM kovi he will become king the of Auna  
 'Kovi was elected the village head of Auna'.

In the example above, we notice that the two R-expressions behave differently, the reason being that real names don't take determiners like other R-expressions; such is the case of *Kovi*, which is similar to English personal human naming system. However, other R-expressions apart from names for individuals take determiners in both Kambari, such as *mogono'o* 'king the', in Kambari. Here again, morphology distinguishes Kambari and English language R-expression, but the two R-expressions are free in their environment.

- (23) **Muwu'un** n damma ta aciyele **ulinga'a** waa dana usan shi.  
 Children the they tell.Pst. CM themselves work the it will be hard not  
 'The children told themselves that the work wouldn't be too hard'.

The example in (23) above shows that the R-expressions are all free, and it reveals similar properties of NP in Kambari where real names don't use determiners in contrast to other Full NPs as the case of '*Muwu'un-children the*' and '*ulinga'a-work the*' shows. This is a clear example that Kambari R-expressions are in clear contrast to English R-expressions morphologically, as can further be seen in the following example (24) below:

- (24) **Mogono'o**<sub>i</sub> **u** damma ta **Vanumu**<sub>j</sub> kambuwa yi<sub>i</sub> ni ishe'en.  
 King the he say.Pst. CM Vanumu return him with hoe  
 'The king said that Vanumu should return the hoe to him'.

The NPs of Kambari in this example also show a morphological distinction to English where '*Mogono'o-king the*' seems to be free in its environment with an attached determiner, and '*Vanumu*' however, though free in its environment, without a determiner, similar to the English language. *Vanumu* is not bound to *Mogono'o* because they are all free and have satisfied principle C of the Binding Theory.

- (25) **Tagwai** yuwan t<sub>a</sub> a<sub>t</sub>yo ana waa yuwan urana'a ma~ul<sub>a</sub> agba u koto **ulinga'a** shi.  
 Tagwai do CM best that he will do day complete and he finish work the not  
 'Tagwai has tried all day but he cannot finish the work'.

The distribution of NP in example (25) above shows that real names and other Full NP types pattern exactly the same in English and Kambari. We notice that Full NPs are free everywhere both in English and Kambari with a morphological difference in the form of Kambari R-expressions as in 'Tagwai' a real name and 'ulinga'a-work the, another Full NP type, where the determiner is attached with the noun.

- (26) **Vuma'a**<sub>i</sub> **u**<sub>i</sub> 'yuwan t<sub>a</sub> aciya<sub>i</sub> adama o oso a mara.  
 Man the he refuse CM himself because of drink.Pr.cont. of bear  
 'The man hates himself for drinking beer'

We should note that Full lexical NPs in English and Kambari are similar in their distribution because both forms are free in the environment where they occur as example (26) above shows, 'Vuma'a' cannot be bound by 'aciya<sub>i</sub>' in this example which is in accordance to principle C of Binding Theory. Consider again the following example in (27) below:

- (27) **Mogono'o**<sub>i</sub> **u**<sub>i</sub> t<sub>a</sub>waa t<sub>a</sub> ni ikarabu o una.  
 King the he bring.Pst. CM with maize from farm  
 'The king brought the maize from the farm'.

In this example, because the NP is not a real name, the determiner is attached to the noun unlike the case of English where the determiner is always separated from the noun. The distinction in the forms is that of morphology (*mogono'o* – *king the*), and double antecedent (*mogono'o* and *u*) referring to the same entity, rather than phonology as seen in the case of most pronouns in the Kambari language.

- (28) **Ali'i**<sub>i</sub> a<sub>i</sub> cuwa t<sub>a</sub> aciyel<sub>e</sub><sub>i</sub>.  
 Men the they praise.Pst. CM themselves  
 'The men praised themselves'.

This example (28) shows a distribution similar to (26 & 27); it seems to me we have a case of double antecedent in the sentences where (*Vuma'a*(i.e *man the*) and *u*(i.e *he*) in (26), (*Mogono'o*(i.e., *king the*) and *u* (i.e., *he*) in (27) and (*Ali'I* (i.e.,*men the*) and *a* (i.e.,*they*) in (28): in all the instances the double antecedents *prima facie* refer to the same entity. We will return to this in the section below.

- (29) **Egbere**<sub>i</sub> t<sub>a</sub> jiyisan a na n<sub>j</sub> 'yuwan y<sub>i</sub> t<sub>a</sub>.  
 Egbere is think.Pr.cont. that I hate her CM  
 'Egbere thinks that I hate her'.

The form of the NPs in the above example shows that ‘*Egbere*’, a Full lexical NP is free in its environment and it meets the requirement of principle C of the BT, while the other two NPs in the sentence (*n* and *yi*), pronominals, each conforms with principle B. One is free in its binding domain while the other is not free within its binding domain – ‘*n* (i.e., *I* is free while ‘*yi* -her’ is not, it is bound by the antecedent because they are coindexed and therefore corefer to one another. Consider (30) below:

- (30) **Peshe<sub>i</sub> je’en ta na Cigashi<sub>i</sub>.**  
 Peshe dance.Pst. CM with Cigashi  
 ‘Peshe danced with Cigashi.’

In the above example, the two Full lexical NPs are all free. Thus, there is no difference between Kambari and English and both conform to principle C of the Binding Theory. They are not bound and each is an independent entity.

- (31) **Wu<sub>i</sub> una ta Langashi<sub>i</sub>.**  
 S/he kill.Pst. CM Langashi  
 ‘S/he killed Langashi’.

In virtue of the fact that binding is typically an asymmetric relationship, in example (31) above, the pronominal ‘*Wu*’ binds the Full NP ‘*Langashi*’ The binder here is ‘*wu*’ because it is coindexed with ‘*Langashi*’ and c-commands ‘*Langashi*’. ‘*Langashi*’ is the thing being bound (the bindee).

The above examples corresponds to English R-expressions where Full lexical NPs are basically free everywhere. Consider these examples (taken from Carnie 2007:143):

- (32) a) \*Heidi<sub>i</sub> kissed Miriam<sub>i</sub>.  
 b) \*Art<sub>i</sub> kissed Geoff<sub>i</sub>.  
 c) \*She<sub>i</sub> kissed Heidi<sub>i</sub>.  
 d) \*She<sub>i</sub> said that Heidi<sub>i</sub> was a disco queen.

In none of these sentences can the second NP (all R-expressions) be bound by a c-commanding word. This in itself isn’t surprising, given the fact that R-expressions receive their meaning from outside the sentence (i.e., from the context). That they don’t get their meaning from another word in the sentence (via binding) is entirely expected. We do have to rule out situations like (32). We should however, note that example (32c) is *not* a violation of Principle B. *Heidi* does not bind *she* here, even though they are coindexed. This is because *Heidi* does not c-command *she*. It is important to realize that coindexing is not the same thing as coreference; any two coindexed NPs are coreferential, but not all pairs of coreferential NPs are coindexed. The whole point of identity in sentences of this kind is to convey the information that two distinct (i.e. distinctly indexed) expressions refer to the same entity in the world of discourse. Thus far, co-indexing has same index; binding requires a c-command relationship between the

coindexed elements. In our discussion so far, we looked at sets of data concerning the distribution of different kinds of NPs in English and Kambari. We have seen that these different kinds of NPs can appear in different syntactic positions. In the next section, we shall consider how a simple set of Binding Principles (A, B, and C) also governs the distribution of NPs in English and Kambari.

### 3.4 Binding Principles and the Structure of NPs in English and Kambari

Binding theory determines the interpretation and distribution of Pronouns and Anaphors. It is formulated in terms of three principles: Condition A, which applies to Anaphors; Condition B, which applies to Pronouns, and Condition C, which applies to names and other referential expressions (R-expressions).

#### 3.4.1 Principle A

Binding principle A governs the distribution and interpretation of anaphors. Anaphors are dependent nominal elements, which must have a sentence-internal antecedent. Unlike pronouns, they cannot refer to sentence-external contextual elements. Most languages have two kinds of anaphoric elements: 1) reflexives, and 2) reciprocals, but the Kambari language has only one form of anaphoric element: reflexive.

The principle states that an anaphor must be bound in its binding domain and that reflexive and its antecedent must agree. This constraint says that anaphors must find an antecedent within the clause that immediately contains them. It is intuitively clear why coindexed elements should exhibit a form of agreement: coindexation indicates that the expression denotes the same entity; the properties indicated by agreement features are characteristically properties of the entity referred to (the expressions *denotation*). Thus singular NPs normally denote single entities, whereas plural NPs denote collections. Hence, a singular pronoun cannot normally be coindexed with a plural NP, because they cannot have the same denotation. Example (6b) is represented here as (33a):

- (33) a) **Peshe<sub>i</sub>** kalyuwa ta **aciya<sub>i</sub>yi** a masukaci'i.  
 Peshe watch S.pr CM herself in mirror the  
 'Peshe watches herself in the mirror'
- b) \***Peshe<sub>i</sub>** kalyuwa ta **aciya<sub>a</sub>va** a masukaci'i.  
 Peshe watch S.pr CM myself in mirror the

In (33a) the anaphor *aciya<sub>i</sub>yi* shows that it refers to an NP within the same domain, *Peshe*. The reflexive is bound by its antecedent, they are coindexed, and antecedent is the binder and the anaphor becomes the bindee. However, in (33b) the anaphor *aciya<sub>a</sub>va* is not bound by the NP *Peshe*. They are coindexed but binding did not apply because there is no coreferentiality between the elements, they lack agreement in person.

Similarly, example (7a) is repeated here as (34a):

- (34) a) Sue<sub>i</sub> likes herself<sub>i</sub>  
 b) \*Susan<sub>i</sub> frightens her<sub>i</sub>  
 c) Susan<sub>i</sub> frightens her<sub>j</sub>

In (34a), *Sue* c-commands *herself* and they are coindexed with each other. This shows that English patterns like Kambari anaphors. The antecedent c-commands and binds the anaphor. The antecedent is the binder while the anaphor becomes the bindee. (34b) shows a violation of Principle B. The pronoun cannot be bound by its antecedent but rather it should be free in its syntactic domain. While (34c) conforms to Principle B where *her* refers to an NP outside the domain, and *her* is not coindexed with *Susan*, thus, they do not refer.

Furthermore, consider (35), where the use of *\*himself* renders (35a) ungrammatical but (35b) yields a well-formed structure. Anaphors, unlike pronouns, must have an antecedent within the sentence.

- (35) a) \*himself arrived  
 b) He arrived

The ungrammaticality of (35a) can be plausibly attributed to inability of *himself* to appear in a nominative position. Similarly, Kambari data patterns the same way with English by the examples in (36):

- (36) a. \*Aciyav<sub>i</sub> u ~asa ta  
 ‘\*himself/herself S/he slapped’  
 b. U ~asa ta aciyay<sub>i</sub>  
 ‘S/he slapped himself/herself’

Analogously, the ungrammaticality of (36a) of Kambari data here is attributed to the inability of *aciyay<sub>i</sub>* (an anaphor) to appear in a nominative position. In (36b) the sentence is a well-formed construction in that the antecedent takes its nominative position and the anaphor its accusative position.

Again anaphors must have feature-compatible antecedents as in the following sentences:

- (37) a. Stephin<sub>i</sub> like himself<sub>i</sub>  
 b. \*Claudia<sub>i</sub> likes himself<sub>i</sub>  
 c. \*Susan<sub>i</sub> believes [himself<sub>i</sub> to be genius]  
 d. Susan believes [him to be genius]

In the above examples, (37a & d) are well-formed as against (37b & c). The reason for the ill-formedness in (37b & c) is due to lack of agreement in gender.



Analogously, the same scenario can be observed in Kambari, as exemplified in (38) below:

- (38) a. \*Egbere ta jiyisan a na  $n_i$  'yuwan ta *aciyayi*. (\*... that I hate herself).  
 b. \*Ali'i a cuwa ta *aciyayi*. (men the they praise himself)

In examples (38a-b), the ungrammaticality resulted from the anaphors not agreeing with its antecedents in person (38a) and in number (38b). The double antecedents 'Ali'i a (= *men the they*') in (38b) have plural form and therefore do not agree with the anaphor.

There is also a c-commanding relationship between a relevant antecedent and an anaphor as can be seen in the following examples; the antecedent must c-command the anaphor:

- (39) a. \*Stephin<sub>i</sub>'s mother likes himself<sub>i</sub>.  
 b. Stephin<sub>i</sub>'s mother likes him<sub>i</sub>.  
 c. \*[That Stephin<sub>i</sub> is always ignored] irritates himself<sub>i</sub>.  
 d. [That Stephin<sub>i</sub> is always ignored] irritates him<sub>i</sub>.

The ungrammaticality in (39a & c), results from the fact that the antecedents do not c-command the anaphors in these given examples. Thus, pronouns do not have a c-commanding requirement. The antecedents of the pronoun in (39b&d) do not c-command them.

Another crucial anaphoric criterion specifies that an antecedent of an anaphor cannot be 'too far' from the anaphor, while the antecedent of a pronoun cannot be 'too close' to it, as the following examples suggest:

- (40) a) \*Stephin<sub>i</sub> thinks that Claudia likes himself<sub>i</sub>.  
 b) Claudia thinks that Stephin<sub>i</sub> likes himself<sub>i</sub>.

In (40a) the anaphor is too far from its antecedent hence, the result of its ungrammaticality, but in (40b) the antecedent and the anaphor are close enough to make a well-formed construction.

- (41) a) Stephin<sub>i</sub> thinks that Claudia likes him<sub>i</sub>.  
 b) \*Claudia thinks that Stephin<sub>i</sub> likes him<sub>i</sub>.

The ungrammaticality of (41b) results from the fact that the antecedent is too close to the anaphor, but in (41a), the antecedent is far enough to make a well-formed construction. The next principle to be discussed is principle B.

### 3.4.2 Principle B

Principle B states that a pronominal must be free in its binding domain. Pronouns may not be bound. (A pronoun must not be c-commanded by a co-indexed NP within its own

clause). One of the properties of pronominal encoded in Principle B says that a pronoun can only be used if it is not A-bound at all, or if its A-binder is far enough away. Example (15b) is repeated here as (42):

(42) **He** left after **Nicholas** found the tricycle.

Here, the pronoun *he* precedes the noun phrase *Nicholas*, and *he* appear ‘higher’ in the tree than *Nicholas*. Specifically, in this case the pronoun c-commands the noun *Nicholas*. This example in English is akin to the one in Kambari as showcased by (43). (11a) is represented here as (43):

(43) **Wu** una **yi** ta.  
S/he kill.Pst. her/him CM  
‘S/he killed her/him’.

In this example, *yi* is free in its binding domain; it is not bound by its antecedent and as such they are not coindexed in any form. The pronominal *yi* is not c-commanded by its antecedent *wu*. Consider the examples in (10a-b, 12, 14, 16, 17 18, &19), given here as (44a- g) with their respective interpretations below:

(44)a. **Ei** ene ta n’utsa n **le**.  
3pl. see.Pst. CM friends of 3pl.acc  
‘They saw their friends’.

In example (51a) above, the Kambari pronominals *e* 3pl. is coindexed with another 3pl. accusative form *le*. The accusative form refers to an NP, its antecedent outside its domain.

b. **A** ca **yi** ta ikebe.  
They give.Pst. him/her CM money  
‘They gave him/her some money’.

Example (44b) shows that the pronoun *yi* refers to an entity other than the antecedent *a* in the world of discourse. Thus, *yi* is free in its binding domain, it is not bound by the antecedent, they are not coindexed and they did not c-command each other. Thus, *yi* cannot refer to the same entity regardless of the domain. This property of Kambari pronouns patterns with the English language.

c. **U** damma ta **u** ta kamba.  
S/he say.Pst CM s/he will.Pst. go back  
‘S/he said that s/he would go back’.

The example given in (44c) shows that the 3sg. pronoun *u* refers to the same person in the world of discourse. Although the pronoun *u* is bound by the antecedent, it is free in its binding domain. This however, patterns with the English language.

- d. U      kambuwa **mu** ta    mota.  
       S/he    return.Pst. me CM    car  
       ‘S/he returned the car to me’.

In example (51d) above, the 1sg.acc. *mu* is free in its domain, it doesn’t get its meaning by the 3sg.nom. *u* form. Each is free in its binding domain because *mu* is not coreferential with *u* in the structure.

- e.      U            yuwan            **wu**    ta.  
       S/he    speak.Pst. to you CM  
       ‘S/he spoke to you’.

Example (51e) exhibit similar pattern with (51d) because the 1sg.acc. *wu* did not refer to the 3sg.nom. *u*. They are all free in the binding domain. They cannot be coindexed nor corefer with each other.

- f.      N      ca            yi            ta    atagada.  
       I    give.Pst. her/him CM    books  
       ‘I gave her/him the books’.

In addition, the 3sg.acc. *yi* in example (44f), can refer to any entity in the world of discourse rather than the 1sg.nom *n* in the same domain. The 1sg.nom. *n* and the 3sg.acc. *yi* are not in any way referential with each other. The data here proves that English patterns the same way with Kambari in this regard.

- g.      **Mogono’o**    ca            yi            ta    ikebe.  
       King the    give.Pst. him/her CM    money  
       ‘The king gave him/her some money’.

The 3sg.acc. form *yi* in example (44g) shows that the pronoun cannot refer to the same entity *mogono’o* in the world of discourse. The pronoun *yi* can only get its meaning outside the context of discourse.

- h.      **Mogono’o**    una            yi            ta.  
       King the    kill.Pst. him/her CM  
       ‘The king killed him/her’.

In example (44h), the pattern is similar to (44g) because the 3sg.acc. *yi* cannot refer back to *mogono* 'o for its meaning. The pronoun is free in its binding domain in that it is c-commanded by *mogono* 'o and as such they are not coindexed.

- i. **Chigashi<sub>i</sub>** jīyan    tā    **u<sub>i</sub>**    tā    nu    ugbozu  
 Chigashi think.pr. CM he is with wisdom/clever  
 'Chigashi thinks that he is clever'.

However, the following example (44i) shows that the 3sg. *u* refers to an NP *Chigashi*. *Chigashi* is feature-compatible with the pronoun. The pronoun is free here despite the fact that it is coindexed with its antecedent, they are not bound.

- j. **Egbere<sub>i</sub>** tā    jīyisan                    a    na            n<sub>j</sub>    'yuwan            **y<sub>i</sub>**    tā.  
 Egbere is think.Pr.cont. that I hate her CM  
 'Egbere thinks that I hate her'.

Example (44j) shows that the 3sg.acc. *yi* refers to an NP *Egbere* outside the domain. *yi* is too close and/or in the same immediate clause with 1sg. *n*. Therefore, *yi* and *Egbere* are coindexed and *yi* refers to *Egbere* for its meaning.

The examples discussed above shows that the English and Kambari pronouns patterns alike in many respects. We shall shortly see that the next principle imposes a different set of restrictions.

### 3.4.3 Principle C

Binding principle C states that R-expression or Full lexical NPs are free everywhere. They cannot be bound at all so as to rule out repetition of full nominal. Example (19) is repeated here as (45):

- (45) **Ango** damma    tā    u    tā    yuwusan    majiyan    **Fatima**    ciga    yi    tā.  
 Ango say.Pst. CM he is do.Pr.cont. think.Pr.cnt. Fatima like.Pst. him CM  
 'Ango said he thought that Fatima liked him.'

(45') Fatima likes Ango

In (45) above, the Kambari R-expressions *Ango* and *Fatima*, occur in a proper subset of the environments which allow pronouns as an independent element. *Fatima* is not bound by *Ango*, each is free. There is no distinction in the form of English and Kambari NPs in this instance.

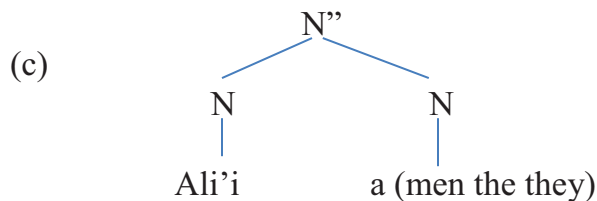
One interesting phenomena to note in kambari data with respect to its R-expression is the notion of 'double antecedent', in most cases, the R-expressions that allow a determiner most often than not exploit double antecedent which constitutes a distinctive property of Kambari R-expressions. Consider what obtains in examples (46) below and its possible interpretation:

- (46) a) **Peshe<sub>i</sub>** kalyuwa ta **aciya<sub>y</sub>i<sub>i</sub>** a masukaci'i.  
 Peshe watch S.pr CM herself in mirror the  
 'Peshe watches herself in the mirror'

In example (46a), the R-expression here didn't take double antecedent, but interpretively, the anaphor *aciya<sub>y</sub>i* is bound by its antecedent *Peshe*, they are coindexed and therefore corefer to each other.

- b) **Ali'i<sub>i</sub>** a<sub>i</sub> cuwa ta aciyele<sub>i</sub>.  
 Men the 3pl. praise.Pst. CM themselves  
 'The men praised themselves'.

Sentence (46b) showcases an instance of double antecedent: 'Men the and a' are both possible antecedents and as such they bind the anaphor *aciyele* being coreferential entity that agrees in number with its antecedent. This is represented in the tree below:



This shows that there are double NPs in the construction of Kambari NPs R-expressions as against what obtains in the English language.

- d) **Mogono'o<sub>i</sub>** u<sub>i</sub> tawaa ta ni ikarabu o una.  
 King the 3sg. bring.Pst. CM with maize from farm  
 'The king brought the maize from the farm'.

The same realization is evident in (46d) where we also see a double antecedent in the sentence. We have a singular R-expression with a determiner fixed to the root word *mogono'o* and 3sg pronoun *u*. There is no issue of binding in this example because the aim is to show how double antecedent works in the Kambari data presented here.

- e) **Vuma'a<sub>i</sub>** u<sub>i</sub> 'yuwan ta aciya<sub>y</sub>i<sub>i</sub> adama o oso a mara.  
 Man the 3sg. refuse CM himself because of drink.Pr.cont. of bear  
 'The man hates himself for drinking beer'

In example (46e), there is double antecedent and an issue of binding. Here, the anaphor *aciya<sub>y</sub>i* corefer with its antecedents (*Vuma'a* and *u*) and therefore bound. *aciya<sub>y</sub>i* refers to both NPs, *Vuma'a* and *u*. The above example is free of principle A because the anaphor is bound in its domain and the reflexive agree with its antecedents in number and person.

- f) **Mogono'o**<sub>i</sub> u damma ta **Vanumu**<sub>j</sub> kambuwa<sub>a</sub> yi<sub>i</sub> ni ishe'en.  
 King the 3sg. say.Pst. CM Vanumu return 3sg.acc with hoe  
 'The king said that Vanumu should return the hoe to him'.

Example (53f) shows double antecedent and binding too. The two antecedents are *mogono'o* and *u*, and they are coindexed with the pronominal 3sg. (*yi*) which is an accusative pronoun and it made them to corefer and the pronominal bound by its antecedents. There is agreement in number and person.

- g) **Muwu'un**<sub>i</sub> n<sub>i</sub> damma ta aciyele<sub>i</sub> **ulinga'a** waa dana<sub>a</sub> usan shi.  
 Children the 3pl. tell.Pst. CM themselves work the it will be hard not  
 'The children told themselves that the work wouldn't be too hard'.

In (46g), apart from double antecedent, binding takes place in a proper set of environment, within the binding domain. The anaphor and its antecedents both agree in number and person. The two antecedents' *muwu'un* and *n* are all plural forms and so is their bindee *aciyele*.

- h) **Muwu'un**<sub>i</sub> n<sub>i</sub> gasa ta yanji a juma e le<sub>i</sub>.  
 Children the 3pl.nom. harvest CM millet at farm of 3pl.acc.  
 'The children harvest the millet in their farm'.

In example (46h), there is double antecedent and binding applies between the two antecedents' *muwu'un* and *n* with the anaphor in accusative case *le*. They are coindexed and the accusative pronoun is c-commanded by the antecedents. There is agreement between the antecedents and the accusative pronoun – they are all plural form.

- i) **Esheli'i**<sub>i</sub> a<sub>i</sub> ciga ta aciyele<sub>i</sub>.  
 Girls the 3pl. like/love CM themselves  
 'The girls like each other.'

Here in (46i), apart from double antecedent, the first antecedent *Esheli'i* is fused with its determiner and binding occurs too. The antecedents and the anaphor are coindexed which made them to corefer, thus, the anaphor is c-commanded by the antecedents. The reflexive *aciyele* and the antecedents *Esheli'i* *a* both agree in number and person.

- j) *Muwun* m makaranta'a n **'yuwalai** ta.  
 Children of school the 3pl. hate each other CM  
 'The students hate each other'

Example (46j) shows a distinct form of antecedent by the Kambari data presented here. Instead of having a single word fused with its determiner, in the case of first antecedent, we have an NP with a PP preceding the second antecedent. The data presented in the



examples above show that double antecedent played a significant role in the Kambari language which is contrary to the English language. Most of the antecedents are fused with their determiners in contrast to what obtains in the English language. Again, more often than not, accusative pronouns are c-commanded by their antecedents.

The intuition is that anaphors must have a binder that is ‘close enough,’ while pronouns may not have a binder that is ‘too close,’ the definition of binding simply adds coindexing to the C-command relation. The classical definition of binding apparently aims to establish a subset of coreference relations, namely the set of coreference relation involving c-command. Binding can then be further divided into anaphors binding – which is local domain D and involves anaphors, reciprocals, and reflexives, and bound variable binding – which is non-local domain D and involves pronominals, often called ‘anaphora’ in the semantic literature. Coindexing is marked by subscripts which indicate that the two NPs refer to the same entity. The local domain relevant to the principles of the binding theory is defined in various ways. The core intuition appears to be that ‘domain D’ is the minimal maximal projection dominating the anaphor/pronoun that contains either *tense* or a subject. Binding is defined as in (47) (Chomsky 1981:184):

- (47) *a* BINDS *b* iff and only iff:  
 a.) *a* c-commands *b*, and  
 b.) *a* and *b* are coindexed.

It therefore follows that *he* c-commands *Nicholas* in (48); a parallel occurrence also obtains in (49) which depicts a c-commanding relation between *wu* and *Langashi*, in both cases the entities refer to disparate individuals.

(48) **He** left after **Nicholas** found the tricycle.

(49) Wu<sub>i</sub> una ta **Langashi**<sub>i</sub>.  
 S/he kill.Pst. CM Langashi  
 ‘S/he killed Langashi’.

The governing category is a local domain which denotes the minimal category which contains both a subject and the governor of the element in question. This minimal category is usually a finite IP or an NP containing a possessor (which qualifies as the subject).

- (50) a. **Peshe**<sub>i</sub> damma ta **u**<sub>i</sub> ta kamba  
 Peshe say.pst CM 3sg. nom. will.pst go back  
 ‘Peshe said she would go back’  
 b. \***Peshe** damma ta **yi** ta kamba  
 Peshe say.pst CM 3sg. acc will.pst go back

The principle of the binding theory describes the interpretation of the bold NPs in (50) above. In (50a), *Peshe* binds *u*, and subject to requirements of principle B of the binding theory. There is an agreement between the antecedent *Peshe* and its pronoun *u*. Unlike the ill-formed construction in (50b), there is a violation of principle B where the antecedent and the pronoun do not agree. The accusative pronoun *yi* did not conform to the agreement requirement with the antecedent of the pronoun *Peshe*.

In the same vein, English data exhibit similar characteristics akin to Kambari data as the following examples show (taken from Zwart 1997a):

- (51) a) \*Mary believes that **he** knows **John** well.  
 b) \***He** believes that Mary knows **John** well.  
 c) \*Mary believes that **John** knows **him** well.

The interpretation of the sentences in (51) is similar to the interpretation of the Kambari data given in (50). In (51a), it shows that *he* cannot refer to the same entity *John* because they are contained within the same clause. Likewise, (51b) is similar to (51a) where *he* cannot refer to the same entity *John* despite the fact that the domain has changed, an anaphor should be present to agree with the antecedent of the embedded clause. In (51c), it shows that *him* cannot refer to an NP within domain D (*John* in 51c).

- (52)  $\alpha$  GOVERNS  $\beta$  iff:  
 a.  $\alpha$  is a head [ $\pm N, \pm V$ ] or  $I_{[+fin]}$  or  $C_{[for]}$ , and  
 b.  $\alpha$  m-commands  $\beta$ , and  
 c. every XP (other than IP) that dominates  $\beta$  also dominates  $\alpha$ .

The salient features of Kambari NPs have been established vis-à-vis that of the English language in areas of NP types and their properties. In a table, we compared the reflexives of English and Kambari languages. English has two forms of anaphoric elements: reflexives and reciprocals, in contrast to Kambari which has only one form of anaphoric element: reflexive. We equally observed that both English and Kambari reflexives are bimorphemic: *pronoun* + *self* in English, which is in contrast to *self* + *accusative pronoun* in Kambari. A table further shows a comparison of English and Kambari pronominal in their nominative and accusative forms. However, Kambari lacks gender distinction.

#### 4. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, this study makes the following findings. Kambari and English reflexives are bimorphemic: *pronoun* + *self* for English, and *self* + *accusative pronoun* for Kambari. English reflexives agree with their antecedents in person, number and gender, while Kambari reflexives only agree with their antecedents in person and number because they lack gender distinction. Kambari exhibits a form of double antecedent and the antecedents must agree in number and person. The determiner in Kambari is fused with the root word of the noun, a distinction in morphology, in contrast to English where the

determiner and the noun are two separate entities. There are two distinct elements of 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular nominative form in Kambari: *wu* and *u*, and two plural accusative form: *a* and *e*. *wu* and *e* comes before a verb that begins with a vowel sound, while *u* and *a* comes before a verb that begins with a consonant sound; contrary to the English 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronoun. There are three distinct elements of 1<sup>st</sup> person singular nominative form in Kambari: *n/me/amu*. *me/amu* comes before a verb that begins with a vowel sound while *n* comes before a verb that begins with a consonant sound. This is a clear phonological contrast between English and Kambari. There are three distinct elements of 2<sup>nd</sup> person nominative pronoun in Kambari: *mu/avu/vu* which all comes before a verb that begins with a vowel sound. A contrast in phonology too. Real names and other Full NP types pattern the same way in English and Kambari. Both English and Kambari exhibit an SVO word order and/or structure. The nature of Kambari nouns and determiners. Why they are fused together and the reason behind different forms of determiners. Other issues that deserves further investigation include the issue of double antecedent.

## Note

\* Linguistic data of Kambari is translated into English by Rev. Wakaso Salka, a native speaker of the language in Salka, who has a formal knowledge of interlineal translation and verified by two other native speakers in Salka: Bala Tajiri and Aliyu Tajiri. The distribution and interpretation of the NPs is conducted on the basis of this data.

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## **39. Rule-Based Machine Translation: An Interface between Formal and Natural Language Syntax**

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The principles which govern ways words can be combined to form phrases and sentences in natural language is known as syntax, while formal syntax is not a matter of experience (unlike natural language), but stipulations in order to provide a specified set of strings in a computer programming language. The focus of this paper therefore, is to explore linguistics as the dual planes of theory and practice, by interrogating how PROLOG was used to capture English/Yorùbá natural language syntax in a rule-based machine translation. The study reveals that the machine was able to generate sentences, break sentences into phrases and words in a bid to translate them in both languages.

**Keywords:** *PROLOG, Natural Language, Formal Language, Syntax, Machine Translation*

### **Introduction**

The study of linguistics as the scientific study of language has gone beyond its core or general study. Owolabi (2006:6) explains that as a result of the overlapping interests between linguistics and other disciplines, new (sub) branches of linguistics have emerged such as computational linguistics, neurolinguistics, clinical linguistics to mention but a few. This study is subsumed under computational linguistics.

Computational Linguistics is a discipline that spans Linguistics and Computer Science. It is concerned with the computational models of human cognition (Uszkoreit, 2000:1). Meaning that, a computer will be able to capture native speakers' intuitive/ tacit knowledge of language, so that a person can dialogue with a computer system. McGuigan (2003:1) explains that the main concern of computational linguistics is to become better at the automation aspects of translation, generation, speech and comprehension. Thus, McGuigan's views have attracted research interest such as:

- a) Speech recognition
- b) Speech synthesis
- c) Automated grammar correction system
- d) Machine translation
- e) Speech interpretation and so on

The activities of computational linguistics began about five decades ago in US and Europe but very new and recent in Nigeria. Students of Linguistics and Computer Science are currently exploring the discipline.



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**Machine Translation**

Machine translation (MT) is a complete mechanization process, that is, a mechanical system without the intervention of either a pre- or post-editor. The outputs of MT must be satisfactory with regard to both semantic accuracy and intelligibility (Reifler 1954:1). Hutchins (2001:5), quoting Holmström (1951), explains further the meaning and the limitation of the machine thus:

The application of natural language processing<sup>1</sup> to the field of translation is known as machine translation or MT. Although the importance of developing accurate and efficient MT software is most obvious in more linguistically diverse areas of the world than the United States, MT development is a well-researched technology both here in the U.S. and abroad. For the layperson, it may seem that computers would be well-suited to the problems involved in translating a text from one language to another. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Because human languages are largely dependent on human experience and intuition, it has proven nearly impossible to emulate human language capabilities in a machine.

While Awobuluyi (2010) sees MT in line with Holmström, he is also of the view that MT is one of the significant contributions of linguistics to technology and ICT. He said:

... another operation which researchers would like computer to be able to perform. That operation is known as machine translation, and as its name implies, it involves getting computers to translate well-formed and fully idiomatic written expressions in one language into well-formed and equally idiomatic corresponding expression in another language... computer's judgment on human language may be patently incorrect which shows how difficult it is for now to get machine to accurately replicate all mental operation that human beings perform apparently without much effort. (Awobuluyi 2010: 34-35)

Regardless of the high demand for translation and its needs, the field of MT has barely changed since its emergence in the fifties (Hutchins 2001:1). This reinforces the fact that MT is difficult and challenging; however, it is also a rewarding exercise which is advancing slowly but surely.

As mentioned earlier, the activities of developing MT in Africa and Nigeria in particular is of recent. Only very few Yorùbá-English Rule-Based MT is available and no Statistical Machine Translation (SMT) is available in the language pair yet because there are no enough corpus for its development. SMT relies on large volume of parallel translated materials of the language pairs before close to acceptable translation could be achieved. There are very few translated materials for African languages except Arabic language whose usage goes beyond Africa. This may be because African languages are

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<sup>1</sup> Natural Language Processing, Computational Linguistics and Human Language Technology have the same focus though called differently from different disciplines.

said to be resource-scarce languages from technological point of view (see Pauw, Wagacha and Schryver, 2011), meaning that African languages are languages that have small or economically disadvantaged user base which are typically ignored by the commercial world (Chan and Rosenfeld 2012). African Languages resource scarcity may inform why there are more Rule-Based MT than other forms of MT in Africa.

### **MT Approach Adopted**

There are three main approaches to MT: dictionary based MT, rule based MT and corpus based MT. Tripathi and Sarlchel (2010) explain that dictionary based approach uses entries of language dictionaries whereby dictionary equivalent words are used for translated verse. They report that the first generation of MT in the 1940s to mid 1960s was entirely based on machine readable or electronic dictionaries. This approach may translate word for word and some phrases but will not translate sentences. There is more to sentence translation than word substitution. Most of the other translation approaches utilize bilingual dictionaries with grammar rules.

Rule-Based approach incorporates linguistics rules to translation algorithms. Aside from millions of dictionaries for the language pair; morphological, syntactic and semantic information about the source and the target language is logically adapted to computer algorithm for translation. While Corpus-Based approach is referred to as empirical approach to MT by Khalilov (2009). Since 1989, corpus approach for machine translation has emerged one of the widely explored areas in machine translation. Because of high level of accuracy achieved during the translation this method has dominated over other approaches. Some of the methods of this approach are: statistical machine translation, example based machine translation, and context based machine translation (Tripathi and Sarlchel 2010).

This paper adopts rule-based approach to MT because the researcher is interested in both formal and natural language syntax. Although earlier researchers have based their adoption of the approach on the scarcity of electronic equivalent translated resources which could not be disputed but much more than that, how can we capture differences in the structures of these languages in a formal language so as to achieve translation?

### **Yorùbá Rule-Based Machine Translation**

As mentioned earlier, Computational Linguistics is new in Africa and especially Nigeria. Awofolu (2002)<sup>2</sup> is the first researcher of Yoruba-English MT. The system adopted Rule Based approach to MT because Awofolu (2002) claims that Yoruba electronic resources were scarce. JAVA was used to code the structure of both Yorùbá and English sentences. Rowland (1969) *Teach Yourself Yoruba* was used as a base for grammatical information with spellchecker and statistical analyzer based on neighboring word lexical categories. The work was a pacesetter using syntactic and semantic analyzing algorithms. But the concern with the work is the structure of the sentences and linguistic feature of the lexical

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<sup>2</sup> It should be note that we did not have access to complete report of Awofolu, our assessment is based on three pages report found online.

entries, which themselves are connected to the deficiency of *Teach Yourself Yoruba* in the light of current syntactic discussion like Awobuluyi (1978) Bamgbose (1990) among others. Awofolu (2002) also did not report how the system was able to handle structural and word ambiguity which is one of the major challenges for Rule-Based MT.

Another research that is worthy of note is Eludiora, Salawu, Odejobi and Agbeyangi (2011). They adopted python for the rule-base MT. POS (Part of Speech) tags were used to identify the class of each lexical entry and parser parsed each sentence to its phrasal and word level categories. The problem with this approach is that the parsing could be highly confusing looking at its linguistic representation. For example consider example (1) an extract from Eludiora, Salawu, Odejobi and Agbeyangi's (2011) presentation.

1



Parsing sentences like the above may not reflect the true linguistic structures of the language. From the structure, one cannot actually say what the head of the NP<sub>2</sub> (Object) projection is because the projections are at the same level which is against merge approach to syntactic analysis. More so, the structures state that P and PP project to NP respectively. This is untrue and is not a correct representation of the languages structural architecture. This is mis-informing which needs an urgent review. Though, difference in the structural headship in the Noun Phrase was achieved in that *my father* is not translated as *mi bàbá* but *bàbá mi*.

### The linguistic structural difference between English and Yorùbá languages

Yorùbá is a tonal language like many African languages. It has three distinctive tones; high mid and low. These tones have their lexical, syntactical and semantic functions (see Ladefoged 1974, 1982, Abercrombie 1967, Clement and Goldsmith 1984, Owolabi 1989 and Ufomata 2004). For example, Owolabi (2013) state categorically the structures where there are tonal manipulations in Yorùbá thereby reinforcing the essences of tone in the language. The tonal manipulations are to be considered in the translation process. Intonation as seen in English may not be of interest since the focus of this paper is not on speech syntheses. Although, emphasis is placed on tone which are marked on Yoruba orthography and if not, they may impede meaning or total loss of sense in such construction. Consider example 1 below:

- 
1. Mo fọ abọ  
1<sup>st</sup> sg V plate/dish

The meaning of the sentence (1) could not be ascertained not until the tone on the verb (fọ) is determined. If the tone is low tone (fò) then it means to wash (i.e to wash a dish) but if it is high tone (fó) then it means to break. When this verb has direct DP object the inherent low tone has to change to mid tone because of the direct DP object as observed by Owolabi (2013:), then we have sentences like:

- 2a. Mo fọ abó  
1<sup>st</sup>sg wash plate  
I washed plate

But consider a sentence like (2b) below where the DP object is as a result of the lengthen of the verb; the verb retains its inherent low tone while the lengthened vowel has high tone.

- 2b Mo fò ọ  
1<sup>st</sup>sg wash 3<sup>rd</sup>sg  
I washed it

If the verb has high tone, the meaning or interpretation will be different from (2a) above; it could be interpreted as *to break* as seen in (3a) below:

- 3a Mo fọ abó  
1<sup>st</sup>sg break plate  
I broke plate

You will now observe that if we lengthened the last syllable of the verb to derive the third person pronoun object like (2b) above, there will be a change on the tone of the pronoun.

- 3b. Mo fọ ọ  
1<sup>st</sup>sg break 3<sup>rd</sup>sg  
I broke it

(3b) unlike (2b) has mid tone which is informed by the tone on the verb. Now that the tone on the verb is high, the tone on the lengthened vowel is mid tone. It should also be noted that there is non-existence of any word in Yorùbá as *abọ* as seen in (1) above. Although there are words like *abó* (plate/dish) as used in the examples above and *abò* (object) which is a technical term in Yorùbá syntax. You will observe that tone distinguishes the meaning of both *abó* and *abò*.

Another structural difference in the languages is the representation of tense and aspect. English has three tenses: present, past and future which is marked by modal auxiliary and affixing them to verbal elements through affix hopping rule. For example consider example (4 and 5) below:

4. Bola is tall
5. Bola prest+be tall

(4) is a normal expression in its present tense for, while (5) shows how the present tense is attached to the next verbal element “be” which resulted is (4).

Yoruba on the other hand has two tenses: future and non-future. Future tense in Yorùbá is marked by future tense marker like: yóò, ó, máa and ní (the negative form) and non-future tense inferred from the verb meaning. For example Omamor (1984) stipulates that active verbs connote past tense in their interpretation while stative verbs do not specify time. This brings about the distinction between examples (6 and 7).

6. Adé wà ní ìpàdé  
Adé is prep meeting  
Adé is in a meeting
7. Adé jẹ ìṣu  
Adé eat yam  
Adé ate yam

(6) above does not specify time whether the meeting is concluded or on-going unlike (7) whose interpretation connote that the action has been concluded before it is reported.

Another structural difference in the languages is the arrangement of DP. Though, both languages are head first languages but a difference is observed in the DP. For example consider (8 & 9) below:

8. Ilé pupa náà
9. The red house.

(9) is the translation of (8). They are both DPs. While NP in the DP of (9) is in-situ but that of Yoruba is as a result of NP raising to functional position following DP hypothesis. Although, this hypothesis is widely accepted by western scholars, some African scholars are rejecting its positions for the analysis of African languages; example is Ilori (2010). The concern of this paper is not the scholastic arguments but how these differences in the structures of English and Yoruba are capture for translation using PROLOG.

What we did was to declare each sentence in line with its structure and rules using context free grammar<sup>3</sup>. This we did for each language in its language file and then merge each sentence with its translated equivalence sentence in the target language for translation.

### Formal Language Syntax

Syntax is usually associated with the rules (or grammar) governing the composition of texts in a formal language that constitute the well-formed formulas of a formal system. In other words Syntax defines what sequences of symbols are valid; syntactic validity is independent of any notion of what the symbols mean. For example, a context-free syntax might say that  $A = B + C$  is syntactically valid, while  $A = B +$  is not.

### Interaction of Formal and Natural Language Syntax in PROLOG for Translation

PROLOG is one of the computer logic programming languages. It is run by making a statement in the logical language, which the PROLOG interpreter tries to prove, given the premises in the program. One of the main purposes in developing PROLOG was to create a language in which phrase structure and semantic-interpretation rules for a natural-language question-answering system could be easily expressed (Pereira and Shieber 2002:2). For the purpose of this research Context Free Grammar was used (A context-free grammar is a set of recursive rewriting rules (or *productions*) used to generate patterns of strings) because it looks more like Transformational Generative Grammar. Five files were created where formal and natural language syntax interacts; whereby syntactic rules or natural language is coded in syntactic rules of formal language in the file created. They are: dictionary file (d.pl), Yorùbá language file (y.pl), English language file (e.pl), Transfer file (t.pl) and Read line file. Each of these files is interconnected with transfer file.

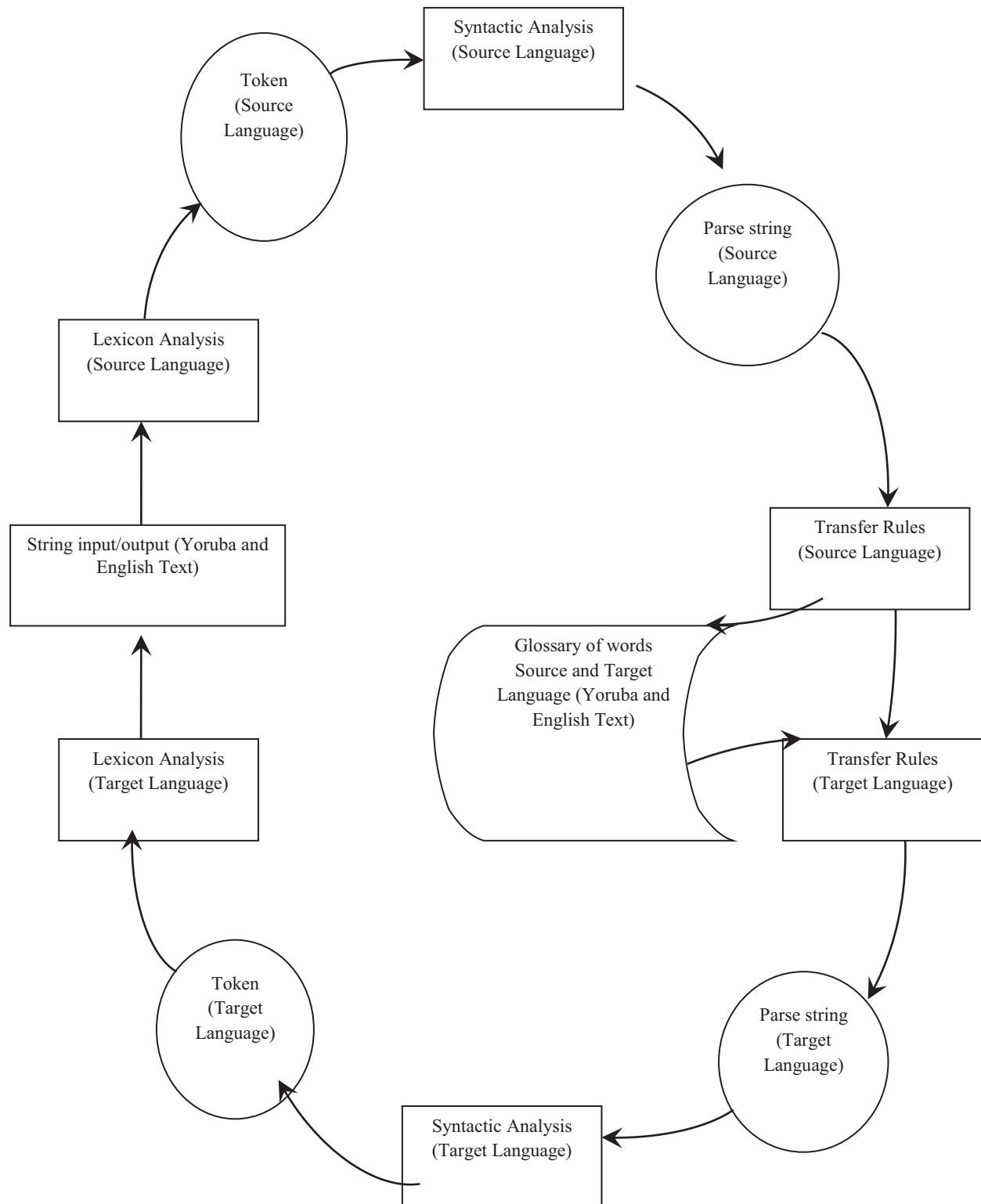
The dictionary file consists of each lexical item and its equivalents in both languages. Each lexical entry is tagged with its word class for necessary easy call e.g. N for Noun, V for Verb, P for Preposition, Det for Determiner etc. Yorùbá file contains each lexical entry of Yorùbá as well as various rules of forming phrases and sentences in the language (see Appendix 1 for details). The same is to the English file (see Appendix 2 for details). Transfer file connects all the files and that is where the translation actually takes place. It takes a sentence in source language and merges it with its equivalent in the target language. Because the rule is not about mere word substitution sentence like “Bólá ga” is not translated as “Bólá tall” rather “Bola is tall”. Read line assist to translate a string of sentence, say a paragraph or a passage from a file to another file. The sentences that the system cannot translate are posted to another file for proper analysis.

It is worthy of note that this system can only translate basic sentences in the language pairs and any lexical item that is not in the dictionary of the system will not be translated. This makes the exercise rule cumbersome. The diagram below shows the flow of information in the system:

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<sup>3</sup> A context Free Grammar is a set of recursive rewriting rules (or production) used to generate pattern of string.





As observed in the diagram above, all processes start and end at the string input and output for both languages. Depending on the language used as source language, the words in the sentence will have to go through lexicon analysis irrespective of the

category of the word (d.pl i.e. the dictionary file). If one of the words in the sentence string is not available in the lexicon, the process will be aborted. But if all the words in the sentence string are in the lexicon, then the process proceed to syntactic analysis (y.pl i.e. Yorùbá language file and e.pl i.e. English language file). At this point, the machine checks if the sentence string conforms to the syntactic rules of the source language. If the sentence conforms to the syntactic rules of the source language, then the process moves to the next stage otherwise error is written on the output string. The next stage is parsing string where the source sentence is parsed into phrase and word categories. Now that the sentence is parsed into word categories, the parsed structure goes to the transfer rules (t.pl) where the language differences are handled, and then the glossary dictionary is consulted for word substitution. The substituted words return to target language transfer rules and from there, it goes to target language parser. The syntactic structure of the target language has much to do with the parser and the lexicon before the translated output comes out. This is because the syntactic structure of the source language has to merge with that of the target language and differences in structures has been checked. Therefore the translation process is cyclic. To demonstrate how this system works, consider the table below:

**Table**

| S/N | Input Command | Description | Output Sentence |
|-----|---------------|-------------|-----------------|
|     |               |             |                 |
|     |               |             |                 |
|     |               |             |                 |
|     |               |             |                 |
|     |               |             |                 |

|    |                                                     |                                                                                                |                          |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| f) | pte.<br><br>Enter English input: bola sold the car. | Enables English Sentence input as regular string and generate the Yorùbá Sentence Translation. | ['bólá', ta, 'òkò', náà] |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|

In the table above (a) command is to translate English Language to Yorùbá language, the code has to be shortened for easy access and conform to the syntax of PROLOG. Hence, English is the source language while Yorùbá is the target language. The sentence to translate is *bola went to the house* then the output is *bóla lọ sí ilé náà*. We could see the bidirectional nature of the system in the (b) of the table. (c) and (d) show parsed sentences in both Yorùbá and English language. S in the output indicates that the string is a sentence NP represents Noun Phrase, N is noun, Verb Phrase is VP while V is verb. Therefore the machine can parse a sentence and show the constituents of the sentence. (e) and (f) show the translation of the machine. You will observe that each Yorùbá word are in parenthesis because that is the only means to capture the tone on each word so that we could capture the structure of the language.

### Deficiency of the Work

As much as structural ambiguity which is well known to Rule based MT was captured, this exercise has not been able to capture tonal manipulation in Yoruba as Owolabi (2006:134) observed hence sentence like (9) below are realized in the machine has (10).

9. Bóla ta iṣu  
Bóla bought yam

10. Bóla tà iṣu  
Bóla bought yam

You will observe that (10) is not the true reflection of how the language functions. Though, the low tone on the verb *tà* is the inherent tone and it retains the tone if it does not have an NP complement, as in (11):

11. Bóla tà  
Bóla make good sales

but when it has DP complement like (9), the verb loses its inherent tone. Other deficiency of the work is that the machine cannot handle figurative expression. Hence, there is need to work more on the machine so as to incorporate the translation of figurative expression.

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**Conclusion**

Computational Linguistics is a field that is interdisciplinary in nature, MT and specifically Rule Base Approach interfaces computer science programming and Linguistics knowledge especially Syntax. Therefore, we recommend cross fertilization of young scholars and huge collaboration as Adegbola (2006) suggests. More so, research funding or grant should be made available for works of this nature.

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## **40. The Relative Construction and the Wh-question in Edo: Implications for the ESL Learner**

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Given the tenacity of the English language within the political entity called Nigeria and in the world, there is remarkable increase in the need for learning English as a second language, especially in this age of ‘globalisation’. Conversely, Edo, a Nigerian language does not seem to enjoy that popularity. This study, therefore, attempts a Contrastive Analysis (CA) of NP movements in Edo (L1) and English (L2) with a view to establishing (dis)similarities between the two languages and consequently identifying resources capable of pedagogical application. The study is carried out against the backgrounds of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) and Principles and Parameters Theory (PPT). The data for the study were obtained from informal discussions of native speakers of Edo in Uselu market, Ramat Park market, and Hexagon Amusement Park. The study finds that most structures involving movements of NP in English (such as relative clauses and Wh-questions) create syntactic gaps which are necessary for both grammaticality and acceptability of such structures. On the contrary, NP movements in Edo result in NP resumption for grammaticality. This peculiar feature of the L1 which is alien to the L2 may constitute serious learning problems for Edo learners of English.

**Key Words:** *Second language learning, Contrastive Analysis (Hypothesis), Source language, Target language, NP movement, Resumption*

### **Introduction**

The knowledge of how humans come-by the use of language is considered to be one of (and in some cases both) language acquisition and language learning; these two are distinct phenomena in linguistics. Language acquisition is the gradual development of the ability in a language by using it naturally in communicative situation. Language learning on the other hand refers to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them. It therefore implies that while language acquisition is *nature* oriented, language learning is *nurture* oriented. Working with this assertion, this paper considers the characteristics of wh-questions and NP-movement in the Edo\* language that may enhance or inhibit learner’s production of similar structures in the English language.

### **Methodology**

Sentences made by speakers of the languages under study constitute the data for the study. For the English language, grammatical and acceptable sentence constructions of L2



speakers of English were generated while part of the data were Edo expressions made by people in Uselu and new Benin markets from which sentences are selected for analysis. These two locations are selected being two main markets in Benin City (the location of the language) where people are expected to use the (native) language freely (and correctly). People's expressions in the selected markets are first recorded with the aid of recorder after which the researcher carries out a transcription of the sentences in the expression. Using phrase markers (i.e. tree diagrams) and labelled brackets, these sentences are subjected to structural analysis paying particular attention to relative construction and wh-questions. The study is carried out within the framework of Principles and Parameters Theory (PPT). This theoretical framework is preferred for the study because the notion of empty category, which brought about the concepts of movement and trace in languages, came within the framework of the Principles and Parameters Theory (PPT).

### **Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis**

Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) was made when structural linguistics and behavioural psychology were dominant in the sixties. Yang (1992:137) claims that the basis for CAH was behavioural psychology and that transfer theory is the psychological basis for CAH. In the view of predictability, CAH is classified into strong, moderate and weak versions; in this study focus is only on the strong version of the hypothesis. The strong version claims the ability to predict difficulty through contrastive analysis. The assumption is that two languages can be compared using previous experiences or facts to decide what the likely result or effect of contact between the two languages would be. The claims of the strong version of CAH are:

- i. The main obstacle to second language learning is from the interference of the learner's native language system.
- ii. The greater the difference between native language and target language, the greater the difficulty will become.
- iii. A systematic and scientific analysis of the two language systems can help predict the difficulties.

The result of CA can be used as a reliable source in the preparation of teaching materials, the planning of course and the improvement of classroom techniques.

### **Theoretical framework: *Principles and Parameters Theory (PPT)***

The Principles and Parameters Theory (hereafter GB) began to take its shapes in the early days of modern Generative Grammar. It is an approach to the question of how children acquire language (Magnus 1995:4). Basically, it works with the idea that common properties of languages are innate; thus only the variations need to be learnt. In this case, language learners need to learn the values of relevant parameters (i.e. the variations) to acquire the grammar of a second language. For the purpose of this study, two modules are selected within the GB framework; these sub-theories are Government and Bounding theories.

*Government theory:* In formalising the domain of Case assignment, Chomsky (1993:25) defines the notion of *government*. The original formulation is given here:

$\alpha$  is *governed* by  $\beta$  if  $\alpha$  is c-commanded by  $\beta$  and no major category or major category boundary appears between  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ . (Chomsky (1993:25))

In Chomsky (1993), the definition was intended to subsume linear adjacency as well as structural intervention. Johnson (1991) observes that the government relation, motivated originally for Case, was proposed to be a key notion at work in some way or another in a variety of modules within the GB framework. Though in later works, the adjacency condition on government, and hence on Case assignment, was held to be derivable from other properties of the theory. As Huang (1999:204) puts it, “a derivative notion, *proper government*, plays a central role in subject-object asymmetries in extraction and related topics”.

*Bounding Theory:* This module of the grammar poses locality conditions on certain processes and related items. The central idea underlying bounding theory is that certain nodes are boundaries for movement. These nodes are called bounding nodes. The bounding nodes for English are IP and NP. (Magnus 1995:14) By its nature, the sub-theory can be regarded as a check on the idea of movement in the Revised Extended Standard Theory (REST) where any moved item is allowed to move anywhere. There are some movements that will give ungrammatical sentence.

Within the GB, traces are made visible, i.e. they must be identifiable as empty positions in the surface structure, similar to the principle of reconstruction for deletion (ECP). Also it is important to note that the distance that a wh-expression (as well as any other moving item) can cover in a single step is regulated by the Subjacency Condition. As contained in Ouhalla (1999:295), the condition states that “movement cannot cross more than one bounding node in a single step”. This condition is essentially a locality condition on wh-movement. A phrase undergoing wh-movement may move too far in one step, else the movement will violate the subjacency condition. In a way, a recap of the condition stated in Ouhalla (above) is that movement cannot cross more than one bounding node in a single step. These bounding nodes act as ‘gate’ through which moving wh-phrase must pass once at a time. If it crosses more than one of these gates in a sentence without taking a temporary landing, such sentence becomes ungrammatical.

## Data Analysis

### *Relative clause in English*

Relative clauses are a special case of embedding. These are different from other embedded clauses in that they do not need to begin with ‘to-infinitive’ gerund, ‘that’ or any other complementiser, but can, instead, begin with a wh-word (a relative pronoun like ‘who’ or ‘which’). Sentences 1 and 2 below are examples of English relative clauses.

1a The boy *who studies biology* visits the laboratory daily.

2a Phillip burnt the book *which I bought*.

Three fundamental features characterise the relative clauses as we have in the above sentences. The first is that a relative clause in English consists of two immediate constituents - the topic (head NP) and the comment (the complement marked by a relative pronoun)' by implication the complement qualifies the noun (which is the topic). While 'boy' and 'book' are the topics in sentences 1a and 2a respectively, the comments are 'who studies biology' (in 1a) and 'which I bought' (in 2a). The second feature is that its realisation is a union of independent clauses having one common item (which is the topic); thus sentences 1a&2a are respectively generated from 1b&2b below:

1b [The boy studies biology] + [The boy visits the laboratory daily].

2b [Phillip burnt the book] + [I bought the book].

The third is that they are realised consequent of movement. Let us illustrate this in 1c&2c below:

1c. [<sub>IP</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> The boy<sub>i</sub> [<sub>CP</sub> who [<sub>IP</sub> t<sub>i</sub> studies biology] [<sub>VP</sub> visits the laboratory daily]]].

2c. [<sub>IP</sub> Phillip burnt [<sub>NP</sub> the book<sub>i</sub> [<sub>CP</sub> which [<sub>IP</sub> I bought t<sub>i</sub>]]].

On the formation of relative clauses in English, 1c&2c shows that it involves the movement of the NPs 'the boy' and 'the book' respectively to the specifier position of the Complementiser Phrase (CP) in the relative clause. This movement leaves a trace in the extraction site with which it is co-indexed in its landing site. Also, the movement of the NPs 'the boy' and 'the book' are subject to subjacency condition; which constrains movement beyond a bounding node at a step. In sentences 1c&2c, the moved NPs only crossed the CP from which the relative markers (who and which respectively) is projected to take their landing at the next NP. In addition, considering the structures in 1b&2b and sentences 1c&2c, it observed that relative constructions in English are as well subject to case criterion and theta criterion. In sentence 1b, 'the boy' is assigned nominative case and theme theta to while in 2b, 'the book' is assigned accusative case and patient. The syntactic features of these NPs are retained even in their landing sites.

### ***Relative clause in Edo***

Relativisation is a highly productive process of expressing adjectival concepts in Edo. Such structures are embedded clauses and they are as a result of sentence conjoining and expression of adjectival verbs. Each of these are considered one after the other; starting with the expression of adjectival verbs.

Edo verbs can be divided broadly into action verbs and adjectival verbs - Omoruyi (1986:283). Following Omoruyi's classification above, it is observed that expression of adjectival verbs involve relativisation. Action verbs cannot undergo such transformations. On semantic grounds, unlike Edo action verbs, adjectival verbs give the inherent qualities

or attributes of persons and objects that co-occur with them. Consider the following examples: 3a illustrates action verbs and 3b, adjectival verbs.

- 3a. Ọ̀sàró khían  
      Osaro go.PRG  
      ‘Osaro is going’
- 3b. Ọ̀sàró zùró  
      Osaro foolish/stupid  
      ‘Osaro is foolish’

The action verb ‘khían’ (go) in (3a) states an action performed by the subject NP but ‘zùró’ (foolish/stupid) in (3b) qualifies or gives the inherent attribute of the subject NP. In (Transformational Generative Grammar terms, the verb in (3a) only has the syntactic feature [+VB] but ‘zùró’ in (3b), in addition to the feature [+VB], also possesses the feature [+ADJ] because of its attributive function). If ‘zùró’ is to be expressed as a pure adjective (and not adjectival verb), it is relativised. First, it gives the structure ‘nẹ ọ zùró’ which glosses literally as ‘that he foolish’ but for purely attributive functions.

4. [IP [NP Ọ̀kpíá Ọ̀kpá [CP nẹ [IP ọ zùró]]] lẹ́ fùà.]  
      Man one REL 3s foolish run +pst away  
      ‘A man that is foolish ran away’

Hence, as observed in the examples above, one way to express NP with adjective specifier (e.g. a foolish man) in Edo is through relativisation.

Relative clauses are also realised in Edo by conjoining two independent clauses. This process necessarily involves movement.

- 5a. [IP [NP Àlìmoí [CP nẹ [IP ẹ́³ Nosá kpàẹn]]] ọ̀ghòghò]  
      Orange REL FILL Nosa pluck +pst ripe  
      ‘The orange which Nosa plucked is ripe’.
- 6a. [IP [NP Èvbàrè [CP nẹ ọ lé]]] ẹ̀sẹ̀sẹ̀  
      Food REL 3s cook +pst very well/good  
      ‘The food that she cooked is good’.

Each of the sentences above contains two clauses:

- 5b. [IP È Nosá kpàẹn àlìmoí] and [IP Àlìmoí ọ̀ghòghò]  
      FILL Nosa pluck +pst orange orange ripe  
      ‘Nosa plucked an orange’ ‘The orange is ripe’.
- 6b. [IP Ọ lévbàrè] and [IP Èvbàrè ẹ̀sẹ̀sẹ̀.]  
      3s cook +pst food food good  
      She cooked the food “The food is good”

The object NPs ‘àlímóí’ (orange) and ‘èvbàrè’ (food) are moved out of their object position to the initial position of the sentences (out of which ‘Nósá’ and ‘Ò’ have been moved), consequently they leave traces in the object positions. A relative marker (compulsorily) forms as an item that connects the NPs ‘Nósá’ (in 5) and ‘Ò’ (in 6) with the new subjects of the sentences - ‘àlímóí’ and ‘èvbàrè’ respectively, and the predicate of the clause ‘àlímóíòghòghò’ is realised as the predicate of the whole sentence. Thus the clause ‘È NÓSÁ kpàèñ àlímóí’ (Nosa plucked an orange) becomes an insert clause (with a gap in its object position). The same process is involved in (6).

5. È NÓSÁ kpàèñ [NPe] [NPe] òghòghò  
       Nosa pluck ripe  
       [IP [NP Àlímóí<sub>i</sub> [CP nè [IP è NÓSÁ ò kpàèñ t<sub>i</sub>] [VP òghòghò<sup>4</sup>]  
       Orange REL FILL Nosa pluck.PST ripe
- 6c. Ò lé [NPe] [NPe] èsésè  
       3s cook.PST good
- Èvbàrè<sub>i</sub> nè ò lé t<sub>i</sub> èsésè  
       Food REL 3s cook.PST good

Both subject and object NPs can be relativised in Edo. From (4), where the relativised NP is a subject NP, it is observed that the NP “Òkpiá Òkpá” (one man) leaves a resumptive pronoun which has identical properties with the moved element. Though ‘ò’ (it) is a complete pronoun, it is simply a residue of the NP Òkpiá Òkpá” (one man), hence the pronoun is interpreted as the NP Òkpiá. The NP and the pronoun have the same -role (Experiencer) and case (nominative) as the moved NP. Conversely, the relativised NPs in (5) and (6) are changed by transformation to wh-phrase before they are moved out of the object position into the [Spec, CP] thereby leaving trace in the extraction sites. The moved NPs are subject to subjacency as well as ECP. The traces are properly governed. They also share same properties with the NPs ‘Àlímóí’ (Patient theta-role and accusative case) and ‘Èvbàrè’ (Theme theta-role and accusative case) in their respective sentences.

### ***Contrastive statement***

Most English relative clauses are derived from the joining of two clauses together such that the object of one is the subject of another. In such case the object is moved to the subject position and the other subject is moved into another subject position (in an insert clause); this is not alien to Edo. Also, movement is common to both languages in the relativisation of object NPs, thus the principles of trace theory, case and theta criterion as well as head movement apply to both languages. However, the movement of relative marker in English is A'-bound while in Edo, the resumptive pronoun stands as quasi-argument for the relative NP which is moved. The pronoun ‘nè’ shares the same property with the resumptive pronoun.

In addition, by the nature of Edo verbs, as explained in this section, NPs with adjectives as specifiers and clauses that contain AdjP in their predicates are usually produced as relative clauses. For example, the Edo structure (7a) below will simply be realized, as (7b) in English:

- 7a. Òkpiá Òkpá nè ò zùró  
       Man one REL he foolish  
 7b. A foolish man

Also this study shows that duplication of NP is peculiar to Edo relative construction (for example as evidenced in the sentence above). The NP ‘Òkpiá Òkpá’ (one man) in the sentence is duplicated in the subject position of the insert clause, though replaced by the pronoun ‘ò’. In English, such a subject position does not occur, else the sentence becomes ungrammatical. Another striking difference between relative clauses in English and Edo is their constituents. While the relative marker is always obligatory in Edo, English demonstrates zero relative; hence, relative markers are sometimes optional in English. The implication of this is that structures such as 8 and 9 below cannot be made in Edo, else it is ungrammatical.

8. \*Àlìmoí è<sup>5</sup> Nosá kpàèñ òghòghò  
       Orange REL FILL Nosa pluck +pst ripe  
       ‘The orange which Nosa plucked is ripe’.
9. \*Èvbàrè ò lé èsésè  
       Food REL 3s cook +pst very well/good  
       ‘The food that she cooked is good’.

In English, the structures can be expressed as we have in 10&11 below yet they will be grammatical:

10. The orange Nosa plucked is ripe  
 11. The food she cooked is good

Finally on the difference between relative clauses in English and Edo, English makes a distinction between the types of relative marker that are permitted in different expression (cf. wh-relatives and that-relatives above). Each of these markers is exclusively permitted in a given sentence for the grammaticality of such sentence while the other is not; such distinction does not exist in Edo.

### ***Wh-question in English***

Wh-questions query specific information; and because of the variety inherent in what specific information can be queried with wh-questions, their formation is not universal. Some wh-questions require subject-verb inversion (when the information queried is in the



predicate), while others (when information gap is in the subject) do not. Sentences 12 and 13 below are respective examples of each class of wh-questions mentioned here:

- 12a. John will buy a book.
- b. John will buy what?
- c. \*What John will buy?
- d. What<sub>i</sub> will John buy t<sub>i</sub>?
  
- 13a. The meeting will end tomorrow.
- b. The meeting will end when?
- c. \*When the meeting will end?
- d. When will the meeting end?
  
- 14a. You are holding Collins' pen.
- b. You are holding whose pen?
- c. \*Whose pen you are holding?
- d. Whose pen are you holding?
  
- 15a. John will buy the book.
- b. Who will buy the book?

As shown (in 12d, 13d and 14d) above, the process of wh-question formation in English involves two distinct movements: I-to-C movement and fronting of an interrogative wh-phrase. The wh-feature in the above examples is such which cannot move alone. Thus, it moves with an auxiliary verb, which exists in the DS or is projected in the SS. In most cases, the movement of the second item necessitates that of the first so as to satisfy the ECP. A sentence such as (12c) above is ungrammatical because *John* constitutes a barrier to the government relationship between the trace of wh-movement and the new location of the wh-phrase in [Spec, CP].

The above shows a case of the presence of an auxiliary verb. When there is no auxiliary in the statement or question before movement, as the case usually is in tensed clauses, a *do* support is projected. For example, if (12) is reconstructed as:

- 16a. John bought a book.
- b. John bought what?
- c. What did John buy?

Moving the wh-phrase 'what' to the sentence initial position requires movement of the (auxiliary) verb *do* to the [C, CP]. (The movement is based on the assumption that *do* is a projected inflection feature of an IP). Hence, 16d and 17 below are realised. Else, the sentence will not be interpreted as a question, or if it is, it then will be ungrammatical as shown in the (16a) and (17c) below:

- 16c. \*What John bought?  
 d. What<sub>i</sub> did John buy t<sub>i</sub>?
- 17a. You took it from the brown wallet.  
 b. You took from which wallet?  
 c. \*Which wallet you took it from?  
 d. Which wallet did you take it from?

In the movement, as noticed in the above examples, the wh-phrase leaves a co-indexed trace in its extraction site. The trace and the extracted wh-phrase share the same properties and are co-indexed. For example, in the sentences above, each wh-phrase maintains the same theta-role with its trace. Also wh-phrases such as ‘what’ in (12d) and (16d) get accusative case. In (14d), ‘whose’ maintains the genitive case assigned to it at its original position. In addition to this, adjacency is required between a governor and its governee if a grammatical construction is to be realised.

The movement of the wh phrase to the sentence initial position necessitates the lexical projection *do*-support (in structures without auxiliary verbs); which must as well move from its [I, IP] position to the [C, CP] position. The wh-phrase, like others, lands in the [Spec, CP]; this is an A'-movement.

Generally, as the examples in this section have shown, Wh-questions in English involve head movement. The moved items (wh-phrase and auxilliary) leave traces in their extraction site; these traces are co-indexed with the moved item (under proper government). This applies to any environment where the wh-phrase is generated in the DS: whether [VP, V, NP] (e.g. sentences 12d, 14d and 16d), [VP, V, AdvP] (e.g. sentence 13) or [VP, V, PP] (e.g. sentence 17). The traces are interpreted as the Wh-phrases in their respective sentences. Each of the movements is subject to subjacency condition.

### *Wh-questions in Edo*

Wh-questions are also formed in Edo. As in English, wh-question formation involves movement of wh-phrase. The wh-questioning words in Edo are ‘donwan’, ‘vboo’, ‘doghe’, ‘woze’, ‘deghe’, ‘de’, ‘devbe’ meaning ‘what’, ‘which’, ‘where’, ‘how’, ‘who’ and ‘whose’ respectively. Like in English, the move wh-phrase is moved to the sentence initial position [Spec, CP]. A trace is left behind with which the moved wh-phrase is co-indexed. These are exemplified below:

- 18a. Ò mùfùá vbè?  
       3sg lose +pst INT.PRON  
       He lost what?
- 18b. [CP Vbè<sub>i</sub> [IP Ò mùfùá t<sub>i</sub>?]]  
       INT.PRON 3sg lose.PST  
       What<sub>i</sub> did he lose t<sub>i</sub>?

In examples 18a and 18b above, the speaker seeks information about an NP which occupies the object position of the sentence. The wh-questioning word is then moved to the sentence

initial position such that 18b is realised, leaving a trace with which it is co-indexed. The trace (with the wh-phrase) is theta-marked (Theme) and is assigned accusative case before movement which is carried onto the landing site.

In Edo, unlike in English, when an auxiliary is absent at the DS, there is no realisation of *do*-support. Also, Edo wh-question predisposes a feature which does not permit I-to-C movement. An extracted wh-phrase moves alone without the movement of auxiliary even when it is present in the sentence; thus the complimentiser position is left unfilled.

- 19a. [<sub>IP</sub> Èdèrùé [<sub>VP</sub> mà ye [<sub>AdvP</sub> devbé?]]]  
 Day 2.poss AUX be.PERF how  
 Your day has been how?
- 19b. [Devbé<sub>i</sub> èdè rùé mà ye t<sub>i</sub>?]  
 How day 2.poss AUX be  
 How has your day been t<sub>i</sub>?

In the above examples, the DS contains the auxiliary ‘mà’ which maintains its position even when the adverbial wh-questioning word ‘devbe’ is projected and moved to the sentence initial position.

It is necessary to point out that it is not all wh-phrases in Edo that can move to the sentence initial position; there are exceptions. For example ‘vboo’ (‘where’) can only occur at the final position of a sentence. Thus ‘vboo’ does not move out of its position. This is exemplified below:

20. [<sub>IP</sub> Ọwá rùé [<sub>VP</sub>[<sub>Adv</sub> Pvbóo]]?  
 House 2.poss LOC.INT  
 Where your house?  
 Where is your house?

Again, Edo allows for long distance movement (which requires successive cyclicity (Haegeman 1994:106).

21. [<sub>CP</sub> Doghe<sub>i</sub> èbé [<sub>IP</sub> Úyí ye t<sub>i</sub> [<sub>IP</sub> e nàtié t<sub>i</sub>?]]]  
 Whose book Uyi like HT read  
 Whose book does uyi like t<sub>i</sub> to read t<sub>i</sub>?

The temporary landing in the above sentence is necessary if subadjacency condition must be respected. (This is provided for by Successive Cyclicity).

### ***Contrastive Statement***

Both English and Edo languages form wh-questions and the same syntactic process, that movement is involved in the formation of such question in both languages. However while I-to-C movement is a necessary component of wh-question formation in English, such

movement does not occur in Edo. That is, wh-phrase is the only item that moves. Also, the two languages differ in the formation of wh-question in that English involves 'do-support' when an auxiliary of the VP is phonetically expressed; in Edo such phonetic form is not realised and thus there is no I to C movement. In addition, all wh-phrases are subject to movement in the formation of wh-questions in English; on the contrary, 'vboo' is not subject to movement.

### Hierarchy of difficulties

In any contrastive analysis, interference is considered as a major factor that affects the quality of a second language learner's output. From linguistic point of view, interference is an interaction or a change in linguistic structures and structural elements; often seen as a deviation from linguistic norms in spoken and written language. Based on the discussion so far, this paper presents properties of Edo wh- and NP-traces that may constitute learning problem for learners of English as a second language. The difficulties are presented in descending order.

Wh-questions seem to be the most difficult construction a learner may face because of its grammatical complexity. Non-subject questioning wh-questions require switch of position of certain grammatical elements in English. The analysis in this study shows that I-C movement is necessary in the formation of such questions in English, since auxiliaries are not raised in Edo wh-questions, learners may produce ungrammatical sentences such as *\*What she has written?* Similarly, it has been considered that in a structure where there is no auxiliary in the statement from which the wh-questions are formed, a do-support is invoked (in English). Since this does not occur in Edo, learners are not likely to observe this process when producing wh-questions in English; such that they produce sentence like *\*What you want?* The ungrammaticality of the above questions is a result of interference from the learner's S1. In addition, since some Edo wh-phrases such as *vboo* (*where*) can only occur in a sentence final position, learners may transfer this feature into English. Consequently, a learner may produce sentence like *\*Your house is where?* Though the sentence is not absolutely ungrammatical (in that it contains clausal elements), students may find it difficult to change this style.

Again, English distinguishes different forms of relative construction. In Edo the only relative marker is *nẹ*, hence, learners may be confused about which of the markers is suitable in a given sentence. An expected consequence here is indiscriminate use of English relative markers. For example, a learner may be tempted to produce structures such as *\*The girl that computer was stolen has reported at the security post*. In this kind of construction, *that*-relative is used instead of *wh*-relative. Again, we observe a situation of NP duplication in the construction of relative clauses in Edo. A transfer of this pattern to English is possible, and such may constitute a learning problem. E.g. *\*The woman that she ran away will be punished*. In addition, since the relative marker is an obligatory element in relative construction in Edo, learners may have problems understanding English relativisation.

Moreover, relative construction will likely constitute a more difficult area for a learner due to a wide range of differences which the two languages feature. First, verbosity may emerge in learner's speech such that an English NP (with AdjP as Spec) is expressed

in Edo as a relative clause (thereby using so many words). This problem arises from one of the processes of relativisation whereby learners want to retain the structure they have in their S1 in S2. This problem also relates to the interpretation of [<sub>NP</sub> Det, AdjP, N] structures in English. Akin to this is the possibility to omit stative (copula) verbs when such structures are produced (since adjective verbs exist in the S1). This tells of the possibility of structure like *\*The fruit that ripe*.

### Conclusion

Having considered the subject matter of this paper within the GB framework, it has been posited that relative constructions in Edo involve NP duplication, this is strange to English. It is also revealed that NP structures with AdjP as specifiers (i.e. [<sub>NP</sub> AdjP, NP]) in English are realised as relative constructions in Edo. Apart from this, the study explains that while English has different markers of relative constructions, Edo has only one relative marker (i.e. *nẹ*). Again, it is explained in this study that I-C movement that characterises the formation of *wh*-questions in English is strange to Edo. In addition to this, it is found that while all *wh*-phrases are subject to movement in English, some Edo *wh*-phrases can only occur at sentence final position. Therefore it is necessary that language teachers pay more attention to the areas pointed out in this paper in order to help learners overcome problems they may encounter.

### Notes

\* Edo is a Volta-Niger language spoken primarily in Benin, Edo State, Nigeria. It belongs to the Edoid language family; other languages in the language family are Esan, Etsako, Akoko-Edo, Fugar, among others. The language is spoken by about 1.2 million homogenous speakers in, predominantly, seven Local Government Areas in Edo State-Oredo, Orhionmwon, Ughunmwode, Ikpoba Okha, Ovia South-West, Ovia North East and Egor. Some of the towns where Biní is spoken include Benin-City, Oluku, Abudu, Okada and Ehor.

<sup>3</sup> “È” has neither syntactic nor semantic function. It is only necessary in the speech to fulfill a prosodic feature because nouns in Edo begin with a vowel. It is a ‘filler’.

<sup>4</sup> “òghòghò”: an example of adjectival verbs in Edo. Such verbs do not take copula verbs when they occur in a predicate position.

<sup>5</sup> “È” has neither syntactic nor semantic function. It is only necessary in the speech to fulfill a prosodic feature because nouns in Edo begin with a vowel. It is a ‘filler’.

<sup>6</sup> Adjectival verbs give the inherent qualities or attributes of persons and objects that co-occur with them. (See 3.2.2)

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## 41. Head Movement in the Tiv Language

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This paper investigates head movement in Tiv in relation to the claims made by Chomsky (2001) and other like-minded scholars in narrow syntax, that (i) head movement does not affect interpretation. (ii) The question of the features triggering head movement which is capable of bringing complication in narrow syntax because of the absence of special triggering features. (iii) The violation of the extension condition which requires a moved item to extend the base or “root” structure after merger upwards. Movement of adjoined heads gives rise to complex heads. Lastly, that moved heads adjoin to other heads instead of merging to other categories directly. The examination is conducted under T to V movement and V to Asp movement in Tiv. Examining T to V movement and Asp to V movement in Tiv, this paper submits that these claims are true, but lack the potency of throwing out head movement. The features in head movement affect interpretation. The primary effect of head movement is to achieve larger morphological and semantic units, as such the features are identified as morpho-semantic features and they behave differently from morpho-syntactic features. Head movement takes place before transfer.

**Key words:** *Narrow syntax, Morpho-semantic features, Extension condition, Morpho syntactic features.*

### Introduction

Head movement is a potent form of movement that can be found in languages like Tiv. Head movement can be defined as that form of movement where X with the maximal projection XP is extracted from its projection and moved to another projection YP headed by Y where X adjoins to Y. Head movement is the complementary counterpart of phrasal movement, taking place where phrasal movement is not possible therefore Head movement and phrasal movement are in complementary distribution in syntax (Pesetsky and Torrego (2001)). Head movement in Tiv is defined by the following characteristics among others:

- a. The landing site of head movement is a preoccupied position
- b. The probe and the target act as a single syntactic object by virtue of adjunction after head movement
- c. The probe and the target become indivisible after head movement, but the affix can be copied to intervening heads before reaching the landing site. In other words, affix of the formed syntactic object can be susceptible to sub-extraction via copying.
- d. Head movement is highly local compared to the locality in phrasal movement.
- e. Phonological and/or morphological affixes are souvenirs for head movement.

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- f. Head movement has no semantic or syntactic effects in terms of scope and reconstruction.
  - g. The landing site of head movement does not c-command the extraction site.

(e) above identified characteristics appears to be an over generalization as phrasal movement in Tiv also feeds affixation as it regards the noun class system, which is used to mark singular or plural numbers.

Head movement which received the attention of Chomsky (1986), later described as “narrowly ‘local’” (Chomsky 1995) has lost the support of Chomsky (2001:37-38) and other scholars in narrow syntax, claiming that:

- (i) Head movement does not affect interpretation.
- (ii) The features triggering head movement in narrow syntax is unknown.
- (iii) There is a violation of strict cycle condition in the form of the extension condition which requires a moved item to extend the base or “root” structure after merger upwards.
- (iv) Moved heads adjoin to other heads instead of merging to other categories directly.

Other scholars, such as Georgi and Muller (2010) have observed that the fact that a head adjoins to another head is problematic in syntactic computations. Matushansky (2006) have also rightly pointed out that head movement based on the point that head movement does not satisfy the c-command requirements for null copies and their antecedents.

It is pertinent to note that adjunction is a syntactic process that has come to stay as long as a syntactic head (lexical or functional) requires additional semantic interpretation to the interpretation which is associated with it in the lexicon via valuation. Such head must move and adjoin to another head, which may result in a modification of the morphology of the head. Head movement has not insinuated itself into generative grammar, but has been declared based in the inflectional structure of languages. Adjunction came into existence based on the tenets of the generative grammar framework in relation to the inflectional structures of grammatical constructions in languages, which are meaningful as morphemes and have a high propensity to affect the meaning of the root word and even the entire construction in which the inflection takes place. Therefore movements that results into adjunction need not to be thrown out based on the inadequacies of adjunction, rather, the framework needs to be revised by tying the loose ends and loosening ends which are too strict so as to cater “proper” head movement. Though adjunction has its own limitations, it should be managed because the consequence of ruling it out would affect either both interfaces of one of the interfaces. For instance, if head movement is seen as a PF operation, the semantic content of the features acquired from the movement would not be read at the LF because the point at which both interfaces interact has been left behind as it would be shown below. In this regard, the claim of this paper is that head movement has semantic effects, and therefore it cannot be a PF operation (see also Bhatt & Keine (2013)).

Secondly, movement operations must vary and an attempt to harmonize the forms of movement in grammar would distort the elegance that could be drawn from the comparison of both movements. In this regard, X movement must not satisfy the conditions that XP movement satisfies. This is because the status of the moving items is not the same. Besides, headedness as status is supposed to license a different behaviour from non-head movement which must satisfy its conditions. Though, it should not be a surprise that the movements differ in some ways, there are grammatical operations that converge them such as valuation, triggered by unique features. For instance, it would be out of place if the probe of an XP movement makes its c-commanded domain its search domain. If the probe cannot find a goal searching its c-commanding domain, the resort would be to introduce the goal via external merge. However, since head movement has no strict respect for c-command, when a probe head cannot find a goal in its c-commanding domain, it searches its c-commanded domain for a probe. This implies that a head has more structural sovereignty as long as the sovereignty is not expensive to its phrasal projection. It is this structural sovereignty that makes a head capable of surviving stranding when its complement XP has been extracted, but an XP which lacks structural sovereignty cannot survive stranding if the head is to be extracted. In such a situation, the head moves along with its complement via pied-piping. This and many more accounts for the inability to reconcile head and non-head movement behaviour.

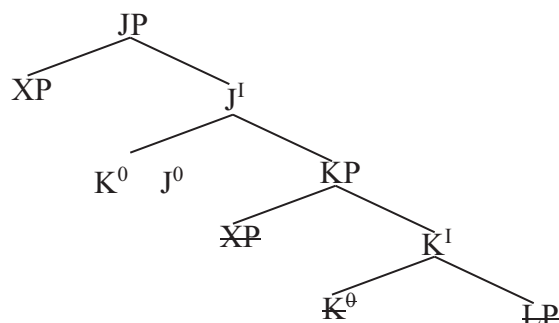
Head movement takes place to create larger morphological and semantic units, and licensing (Vicente 2006) reading from Distributed Morphology framework which see morphological structures as composed in syntax (Halle and Marantz 1993, 1994, Marantz 1993). By morphological unit, it is meant by the acquisition of affixes or other grammatical features which does not appear in the pre-syntactic derivation of the constituent. Morphological information is so vital in narrow syntax such that it is the fundamental trigger for movement, hence the importance of morphology in grammar. Morphological information has interpretative content that must affect interpretation positively when the information is checked as not being harmful to the derivation, but negatively when the information would be harmful to the general interpretation. To cater for this, the harmful interpretation features embedded in the morphology are deleted and in most cases the morpheme is retained such as case in Latin and Greek. Features such as case are therefore called morpho-syntactic features, while it is proposed in this paper that since head movement intends to build larger morphological and semantic units, let the triggering features be called morpho-semantic features.

### **Properties of morpho-semantic features**

- (i) Morpho-semantic features build the morphology of lexical items in grammar and consequently affect interpretation, though not in terms of scope and reconstruction as Chomsky (2001) has rightly observed.
- (ii) The morpho-semantic features trigger head movement in narrow syntax.
- (iii) They are not expensive features in computation that may not completely cause a derivation to crash. However, they have to check against corresponding heads to

get full interpretation, before transfer. Therefore, they are not responsibilities of either of the interfaces: PF or LF.

- (iv) The movement triggered by morpho-semantic features does not violate strict cycle condition in regards to the Head Movement Constraint (HMC) of Travis (1984), but they do not increase the structural projection of a construction – a violation of the extension condition which requires a moved item to extend the base or “root” structure after merger upwards. Head movement is structurally lower, while non head movement is structurally higher, hence the probability to extend the structure because heads are predominantly lower items in their phrase structure.
- (v) The inflectional behavior of morpho-semantic features in grammatical constructions can be more captured in adjunction. Otherwise, a pre-syntactic merge of the root word and the inflectional affixes must be provided. This would cost the clausal architecture some of its projections as they would be irrelevant.
- (vi) The semantic effect of morpho-semantic features cannot be quantified in terms of scope<sup>1</sup> and reconstruction effect. This is because it is a movement that takes place in lower computation while XP movement takes place in higher computation – structural height implies increased scope, therefore scope and reconstruction effect should not be expected from lower computation, as in:



By way of analogy, from the tree diagram above,  $K^0$  and  $J^0$  are syntactic objects of the tree, which would be regarded as the roots (terminal nodes) of their respective projection. XP occupies their branches in as much as XP cannot be recognized as the projector of the maximal projections. Roots are lower from the branches. Any scrambling or operation that takes place at the root or base of syntactic projection or construction would not reflect on the branches, as such it would not be noticeable. An extracted construction with its root and branches cannot be placed on the root of a standing construction but the branches, which would extend the height of the syntactic tree, which would indicate that XP (being the extracted tree with a root and a possible phrase internal branch like a DP)

<sup>1</sup> As a way of disproving Chomsky's (2001) claim that head movement does not have semantic effect in terms of scope, Bhatt & Keine (2013) show that scope is derived within constructions as a result of head movement in German.

and  $J^0$  (being a root) are two different subject. Therefore, by way of differentiation, while merge produces two different objects that are capable of extension, adjunction produces one complex object impossible for further (sub)extraction and incapable of extension as in the case of  $K^0+J^0$  in the construction above. Whatever happens at the lower layer (the root) of a syntactic tree, is not visible at the higher layer (the branches), but may license what happens at the higher layer of the constructions such as case licensing with finiteness as it would be explained below:

### T to V Movement

The Tiv language has T to V movement, other than V to T movement and therefore belongs to class three of Biberauer and Roberts (2008) classification. Biberauer and Roberts (2008) typological classification is based on the “richness” inflectional features of the syntactic objects (T and V). The classes include:

*Class One:* Rich Agreement Rich agreement and rich tense inflection: hence V-to-T and null subjects, e.g. Italian, Greek, Spanish, etc.

*Class Two:* Poor agreement but rich tense: hence V-to-T, but no null subjects, e.g. French.

*Class Three:* Poor tense and poor agreement: hence no V-to-T and no null subjects, e.g. Modern English, Mainland Scandinavian.

*Class Four:* Rich agreement and poor tense: null subjects, but no V-to-T.

Tiv is not a null subject language and it does not have V to T movement, but a reversed format (lowering) as a default mechanism before the interface levels.

Verbs within constructions in the Tiv language possess phonological features which indicate tense which defines their finiteness. This temporal feature is not valued in the lexical composition of the verb as it exists in the lexicon, prior to operation select. For example:

- a. Sésùgh á yé Mángò  
     Sésùgh AgrS.PST eat.PST Mango  
     Sésùgh ate Mango
- b. Sesugh à yă Mángò  
     Sésùgh AgrSP eat.FUT Mango  
     Sésùgh should Mango

The verbs in (a) and (b) above exists in the lexicon as “yá”. In marking past tense, the morphology of the verb in (a) changes and the height of its tone increases compared to



the tone the tone of the root word as it exists in the lexicon. In (b), a raised-low tone<sup>2</sup> marking future tense spreads over to the verb to form a low-rising contour tone on the tone bearing unit in the verb without affecting the morphology, in order to value the finiteness feature of the verb. It is believed that the floating tone is the T<sup>0</sup> and it high tone increased the pitch of the high tone on the verb. The tone function of the tones is to grammatically mark tense and define (value) the finiteness of the verb.

The above function of the tone can be more evident on verbs that do not change their morphology but phonological structure to define finiteness as in:

- a. Sésùgh á                      vëndá              Mángò  
      Sésùgh AgrS.PST refuse.PST Mango  
      Sésùgh refused Mango
- b. Sésùgh à                      vèndà              Mángò  
      Sésùgh AgrS.FUT refuse.FUT Mango  
      Sésùgh will refuse Mango

In the data above, the verb exists in the lexicon as “vèndà”. The preceding high tone has therefore changed the low tones to high tones in (a). In (b), a low tone cannot knock off a low tone in the language therefore the verb retains its low tone, whose purpose is converted to grammatically mark future tense. It should be noted that the agreement marker also exists in the lexicon with a low tone therefore any knock-off would be supposed as movement. In contexts where there is low tone, spreading and “weak absorption”<sup>3</sup> would be proposed, still retaining the concept of movement. T is therefore a floating high tone for past tense and a floating low tone for future tense. It is therefore believed that there is a phonological movement that affects the grammar of constructions such as those cited above, hence the supposition of a T to V movement captured via the phonological process of spreading, where a High tone knocks off all non highs on the verb.

Sequel to the above point, due to the poor inflection status of the Tiv language, the verb enters the derivation with unvalued finiteness feature giving it a non-finite participial form. The verb therefore values its finiteness from its structural relations with the T head. When there is no structural relation with T, the construction remains non-finite semantically, and affects morpho-syntactic activities such as case valuation because

<sup>2</sup> Recent phonological analysis of the Tiv language has revealed that the Tiv language is a two tone language. Using the two tone system, the mid tone for future tense marking in Tiv as proposed by Taiwo and Angitso (2013a) which adopted a three tone system is a raised low tone. However, a low tone mark would be adopted through the work.

<sup>3</sup> “Weak absorption” is a term coined and used here to bring to mind a situation where the tone on a tone bearing unit are not different as in low-low or high-high and not the strong absorption where a high-low on a (tone bearing unit) TBU is followed by a TBU with a low tone, the second TBU absorbs the low tone of the contour, making the sequence High low one different TBUs.

T cannot inherit case from a left periphery head if it does not fulfill the semantic requirement of being finite. For example:

- a. \*Sésùgh u zé makeranta  
     Sésùgh to go.PST school  
     ‘Sésùgh goes to school’
- b. Sésùgh á zé makeranta  
     Sésùgh AgrS.PST go.PST school  
     Sésùgh went to school

From the construction above, if there is no relationship of movement, where T is attracted to move to “zé”, the verb will not be able to value its finiteness (tense) feature and would have remained a participial non-finite syntactic object, which would have cost it the grammaticality of the construction as in (a) where there is no finiteness. Therefore finiteness must be valued on the verb due to the poor inflection of the language for grammatical purposes, and this can only be achieved via head movement. If Tiv is a language with rich inflectional morphology, ‘auxiliaries would have carried all morphological information relating to a lexical verb such as person/number agreement, tense, aspect, or mood affixes’, or an auxiliary would have shared it with a verb. (Al-horais 2012).

The head movement in question is an overt movement before transfer because the moved tense marker has phonological effect as well as semantic effects of its own, other than the semantic effects of scope and reconstruction which it is believed here that are peculiar to non head movement and irreconcilable with head movement. Instead of claiming that verbs move to pick up inflectional suffixes in V to T movement, this paper claims that both the V and the T head bear some kind of abstract inflectional features (e.g., [ $\pm$ past]). For example:

- a. Sésùgh á véndá ù zá-n  
     Sésùgh AgrS.PST refuse.PST to go-ImfvM  
     Sésùgh refused to go
- b. Sésùgh à vèndà ù zá-n  
     Sésùgh AgrS.FUT refuse.FUT to go-ImpfvM  
     Sésùgh will refuse to go

The tense of (a) is past while the tense in (b) is future. The phonological inflection of the agreement marker with a high tone in (a) against the low tone in (b) is what distinguishes their interpretations. However, since the tense marked with tone and verb are elements of lower phrase-structural computation, there is no scope or reconstruction effects in this head movement.

The inability of V to move to T is because its [Tns] feature is uninterpretable and needs to be valued via this form of movement and therefore is the probe<sup>4</sup>. The verb however has to value the attendant [*u*Tns] property if the construction is to remain grammatical, because as the head of the construction, it is responsible for the harmony of event(s) in the derivation. Therefore, the verb will serve as a probe [+V, -Tns] while T is the goal [+Tns, -V], and via agree both syntactic objects will attract and move. This is not for syntactic purposes, but for semantic reasons. The presence of tense in a construction will only serve as a yardstick for the presence of case features, because tense is used for temporal interpretation of a construction.

Furthermore, proposing that T has strong V feature that attract the verb to move and merge to T may pose as a problem of ungrammaticality to our analysis because it will be difficult to account for the movement when the c-command relation between T and V is not symmetric with the intervening AgrS<sup>0</sup> “á”. Given the head movement constraint, christened Minimality constraint, V will have to pass through AgrS before it gets to T. This will be difficult where Agr-head is phonologically represented. Even if it is claimed that it temporarily adjoins to AgrS before proceeding to T, it will end up altering the word order in Tiv syntax. The order will move from:

a. [<sub>TP</sub> DP, T], AgrS, [<sub>VP</sub> V, DP]]

to:

b. \*[<sub>TP</sub> DP, V+T]  $\forall$  AgrS [<sub>VP</sub>  $\forall$  DP]]

The schema above will generate structures such as:

a. Terhemen á úndé kon  
Terhemen AgrS..PST climbPST Tree  
Terhemen climbed a tree

\*b. Terhemen úndé a+ ~~úndè~~ úndè kon  
Terhemen climbPST AgrS+ ~~climb~~ climb Tree  
Terhemen climbed a tree

In (a), V remains in situ but receives the tone marking past tense as well as the preceding AgrS while retaining the structure of the language. However in (b), the verb moved to value its in T after merge to the agreement marker. The structure of the language has been violated and AgrS has been denied the high tone indicating past Tense because the tone does not spread beyond the verb. The presence of the tone on the agreement marker in (a) is an empirical indication that the tense feature passed through the projection, and not the verb passing through the agreement projection.

This leaves us with accounting for only one way through which V acquires [Tns] feature, which is by ‘Affix Lowering’. Harley (2004) submits that head movement is

<sup>4</sup> A probe can only attract a goal to move to it and fill its lacking feature and not the goal attracting the probe.

triggered by [+/- Affix] specification. By affix lowering, the adjoining head does not necessarily need to be the complement of the target head as scholars such as Kayne (1994, 1993); Pesetsky and Torrego (2001); Matushansky (2006) suggest: movement involving a target head complementing an adjoining head can also be defined as head movement. Matushansky (2006) submits that it is only the complement domain (i.e., c-command domain) that can be treated as a possible search domain, but the data of this paper informs the submission that the head movement search operation can be procrastinated if the search in a complement domain does not yield any positive result by not finding the appropriate goal; such a search can be redirected to the complemented domain, searching for a goal in the higher domain of a clause, hence the tracking of T and Asp (as it would be soon be read) in the higher clause structure and the consequent attraction by the verb for movement. In other words, head movement can be to the right or left depending on the grammatical circumstances that can permit or block movement, and the importance of the features to be incorporated.

Tense affix lowering applies in a spreading fashion before the interface levels (PF and LF), lowering the floating tone from T onto AgrS then onto the auxiliary verb before reaching the verb in Tiv. In cases where the AgrS is not present in the present tense form, it is often needed in the derivation of past tense construction because it is a conductor of the tense to the verb. This movement takes place at before transfer, and affects the articulation and perception of the construction as well as the interpretation of the construction. For instance:

- a. [TP Teryima á téé ìkyegh]  
[TP Teryima AgrS sell.PST chicken]  
Teryima sold chicken
- b. [TP Sésùgh à gbídé boo]  
[TP Sésùgh AgrS beat.PST ball]  
Sésùgh played (foot)ball

The lowering of the tense head as a movement in the lower layer of a clausal construction as proposed above, adheres to locality conditions such as the head movement constraint captured in the minimalist program principle of shortest move, where a moving head is not expected to skip an intervening head as in:

- a. Sésùgh á véndá Mángò  
Sésùgh AgrS.PST refuse.PST Mango  
Sésùgh refused Mango
- b. Sésùgh á lú véndà-n Mángò  
Sésùgh AgrS.PST Aux.PST refuse.PST-ImpfvM Mango  
Sésùgh was refusing mango
- c. Sésùgh lù vèndà Mángò  
Sésùgh Aux.PST refuse Mango  
Sésùgh refused Mango

The agreement marker exists in the lexicon with a low tone “à” as a default form. However, the floating high tone, having its target as the verb “vèndà” knocks off the low tone on the agreement marker, thereby making it a high tone syllable before it gets to the verb, knocking off the low tones on the verb as in (a). In constructions where there is an auxiliary, the tone also knocks off the low tone and takes over as the tone on the auxiliary to get to the verb, because “lù” is a past tense auxiliary in Tiv with a default low tone (Taiwo and Angitso 2013a) and it can mark past tense in non stative constructions like (c) above. This whole account of lowering from one TBU to another indicates that adjunction in Tiv syntax is not as strict as that of other languages, where it is impossible to extract the adjoin element (affix/tone) or the target element separately (Matushansky (2006)) – copying makes such movement behavior possible. This is also reflective in the Asp to V movement discussed below.

The question now is what type of feature is motivating this movement – [Tns] feature affix hopping? The feature motivating head movement as in T to V and Asp to V as it would be shown later, is what this paper proposes to be called morpho-semantic features (also see Angitso 2012). It cannot be claimed that head movement has to do with morpho-syntactic features, because where case is to be valued and T has to inherit unvalued case feature from C, it also becomes morpho-syntactic; once case is valued it deactivates back to mere T just for semantic purposes<sup>5</sup> (Angitso 2012) capable of morphological extension viable syntactic objects. Thence, T puts away the inherited Morpho-Syntactic feature of case, and uses the Morpho-Semantic feature [+Tns]. The Morpho-Semantic feature [+Tns] feature is not deleted after valuation. Tense is important in syntax and syntax is sensitive to it, since it is a yardstick for Nominative case valuation.<sup>6</sup> Semantically, tense is interpreted as describing a present or past state of affairs, and so tense is clearly an interpretable feature (Radford 2009:243).

T to V movement can also be found in SVCs in Tiv. Taiwo and Angitso (2013b) observe that SVCs in Tiv share tense. In this case, it is possible for the tense to float from the first verb to the last verb without flouting the head movement constraint. For example:

<sup>5</sup> When case is inherited from the left periphery, the morpho-syntactic feature comes before the morpho-semantic feature in the feature stacking of T as in:

Let the morpho-syntactic feature of case (nominative) be K

Let the morpho-semantic feature of case (nominative) be *t*

The feature stacking of T would be:

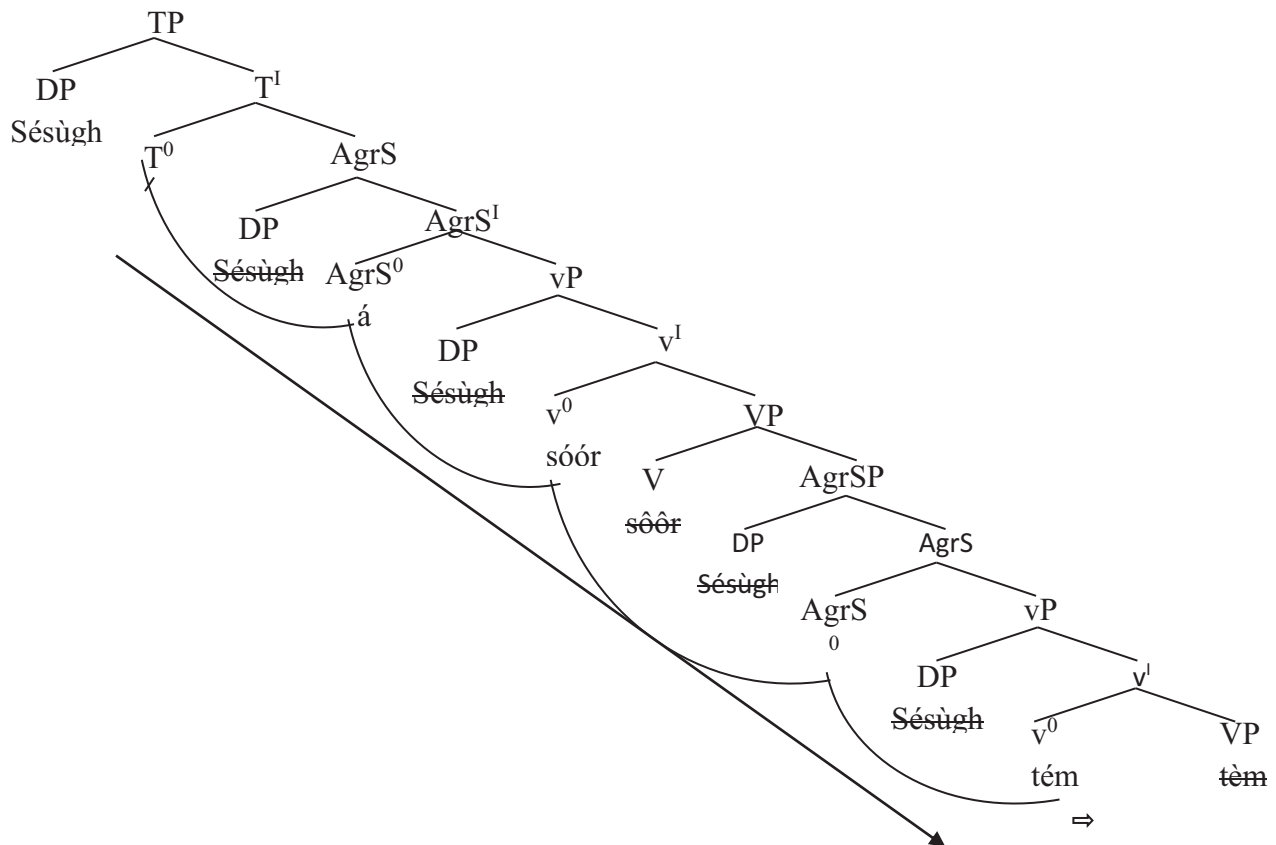
[<sub>u</sub>K, *t*]

Where K is uninterpretable, and T is interpretable. Therefore, morpho-syntactic features are valued before the morpho-semantic feature.

<sup>6</sup> This is against the submission of Kibort (2007) that tense “is not required by the syntax through the mechanisms of either agreement or government: syntax is not sensitive to the tense value of the verb”. This is an illustration of the strong connection between T and C demonstrated in attraction for movement and the inheritance of certain features by T from C such as case.

- a. Sésùgh á sóór á témá  
 Sésùgh AgrS.PST repair.PST AgrS.PST sit.PST  
 Sésùgh sat properly
- b. Sésùgh á kár á yém á bugh zwá gá cì  
 Sésùgh AgrS.PST pass.PST AgrS.PST go.PST AgrS.PST open.PST mouth NegM all  
 ‘Sésùgh passed without saying a word’

In (a) and (b) above, there is only one T which distributes the tone used in marking tense in the construction. The highest projection that each verb has is an agreement projection above it. In other words every verb phrase is c-commanded by an agreement projection, and the tone floats through the agreement markers to all the verbs in the construction. (a) for instance can be schematized thus:



The schema above shows how tone spreads via lowering across verbs in a serial verbal construction in the Tiv language, without flouting the head movement constraint. This does not mean that all the verbs must be affected by the tone; the tone might stop at the first verb if that would bring out the desired semantic effect as in:

- a. Sésùgh á sóór témá  
 Sésùgh AgrS.PST repair.PST sit  
 Sésùgh sat properly



In the data above, the tone in T grammatically spreads down to the first verb “sóór” but does not get to the second verb.

### Asp to V Movement

The aspect feature is a lexical and structural feature in Tiv: the feature is there in the pre-syntactic computation and valued via movement during derivation. Therefore Aspect is a traditional feature of verbal heads and a descriptive label in Tiv grammar.

Asp to V is a movement motivated by the valuation of morpho-semantic features as already mentioned in the previous section. The feature composition of the verb in this case would be [*u*Asp, *i*V] while that of the Asp head is [*i*Asp, *u*V] for this is what makes attraction possible. Asp to V movement looks at how V is able to acquire the affixes attached to it. This is motivated by the fact that the inflection feature is part of the verb in derivation: Asp to V movement is to value the aspectual inflection of V. For example:

- a. [TP Téréngà ngù kár-èn ákóndó]  
 [TP Téréngà is share-ImpfvM cloths]  
 Téréngà is sharing cloths
- b. [TP Sésùgh ôr-ùn tákèradá pépé]  
 [TP Sesugh read-ImpfvM book morning]  
 Sesugh reads in the morning
- c. [<sub>ForcP</sub> Ka Àtér [TP á téé-n íkyégh yé]].  
 [<sub>FocP</sub> FM Àtér [TP AgrS sell-ImpfvM chicken EM]]  
 It is Àtér that sells chicken

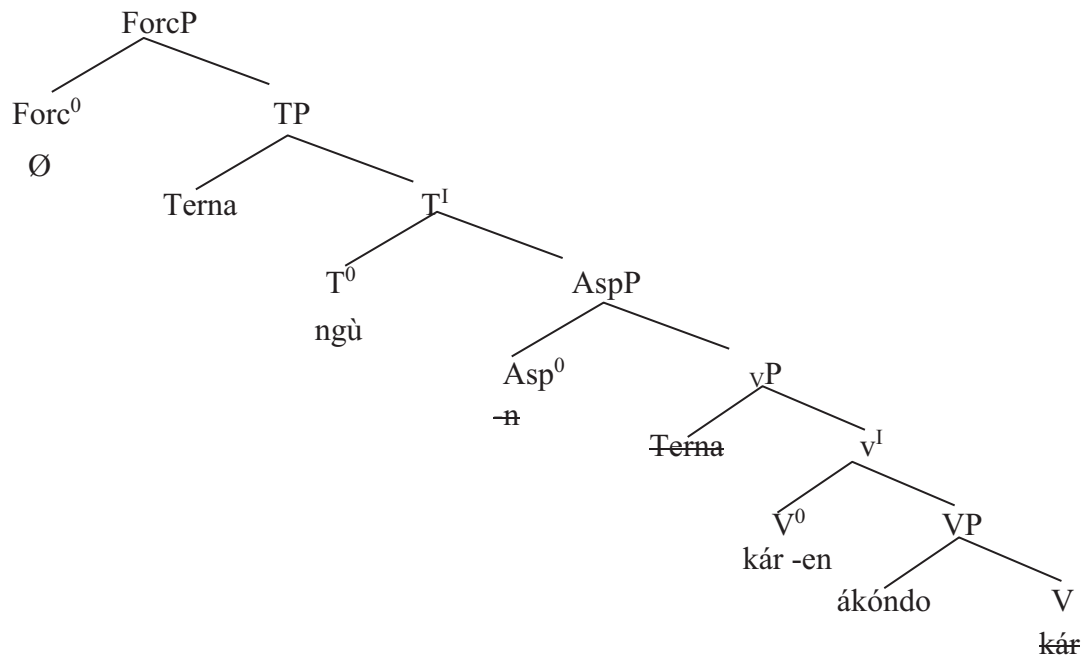
Just like many other forms of movement, Asp to V movement in Tiv is triggered by the need for [Asp] features of constituents to be valued and to create larger morphological and semantic units. This valuation is done through a probe–goal relationship. In this relationship, the goal possess valued properties while the probe possesses unvalued properties, therefore, the probe would have to probe the c-commanded domain since a goal cannot be found in the c-commanding domain within the construction to license its features. From (a) above a general statement can be made that Asp<sup>0</sup> (imperfective aspect) “-n” possesses [*i*Asp] feature, and the verb “kàr” with [*u*Asp] tracks and triggers the imperfective aspect marker “-n” with [*i*Asp] feature to move and adjoin to it, thence the verb becomes inflected with an Asp marker<sup>7</sup>.

The Asp movement category contributes aspectual information for the full interpretation of the derivation at the LF, therefore, this movement cannot be restricted to the PF interface as Chomsky claims: Asp to V movement occurs before transfer. The

<sup>7</sup> The “-e-” and “-u-” before the imperfective aspect marker “-n” in (a) and (b) respectively are epithetic vowel inserted to break the possible consonant cluster.

verb is attracted to value its features and acquire an expanded morphological and semantic form.

(a) will therefore be schematized thus:



From the above analyses above, it can be concluded that aspect is an inherent feature of the verb which forms part of the verb during pre-syntactic computation. Aspect specifically talks of the duration of an activity or type of temporal activity denoted by the verb, hence it is basic. In order to account for this feature syntactically the aspect head project maximally in accordance with the ‘a feature is to a head’ maxim of the minimalist program (Cinque and Rizzi 2008).

In the Tiv language, it is not possible for the verb to move into Asp projection because, there could be barriers that would block such movement as in (a) below thereby altering the word order of the language as in (d) below. These constituents that form barriers to movement can in themselves be part-takers in the aspect inflectional morphology as in (b) below, which by supposing that the verb had moved into Asp to value, would have kept them from having such inflectional feature therefore redefining the semantics of the construction as in (c) below:

- a. Sésùgh vándè zà-n  
     Sésùgh already go-ImpfvM  
     Sésùgh had (already) gone
- b. Sésùgh vándé-n zà-n  
     Sésùgh already-ImpfvM go-ImpfvM  
     Sésùgh has been going

- 
- c. Sésùgh vande za-n  
 Sésùgh already go-ImpfvM  
 ?Sésùgh has been going
- d. \*Sésùgh zà-n vándè  
 Sésùgh go-ImpfvM already  
 ‘Sésùgh had (already) gone’

From the construction above, the perfective aspect adverb “vándè” blocks the movement of “zà” from the vP to the aspect phrase which dominates the adverb phrase. Therefore, the imperfective aspect marker “-n” lowers from its projection, through the adverb phrase accommodating “vándè” to the verb “zà” without leaving a phonetic copy at the head position of the adverb as a phonetic mark of their previous adjunction to yield the interpretation in (a). In (b) the aspect marker has to make an obligatory phonetic inflection on the adverb as well as on the verb, hence the inflection of “-n” on “vándè” and “zà” to convert the function of “vándè” from perfective to imperfective and produce the interpretation thereof. The movement of the aspect marker through the adverb “vándè” before getting to the verb is an indication of adherence to the locality condition for head movements: the head movement constraint. Now, due to the centrality of semantics in determining what happens between the interaction of (inflectional) morphology and syntax, (c) cannot have the same interpretation as (b) when the aspect marker which is supposed to be phonetically inflected on the adverb is not phonetic, hence the elliptical interpretation of (c). In the situation in (c) also, the aspect marker moves through the adverb but does not leave a phonological copy, rather it leaves a null copy so that the construction would converge and a full interpretation would be derived.

Since semantics has been shown to have a stake in the relationship between the relationship between (inflectional) morphology and syntax, it implies that Asp to V movement takes place before the transfer in order to fulfill the obligatory requirements of the interfaces so as to achieve full interpretation via convergence. If the morpho-syntactic requirement is not met as in (c) above, it would distort the semantic interpretation thereby removing the correlation of such a construction like (c) above in contexts where (b) is the ideal construction. Having it that morpho-syntactic feature value morphological features that might cost a syntactic derivation its convergence by its (full) interpretability, so too morpho-semantic features value morphological features that might cost a syntactic derivation its convergence by its (full) interpretability.

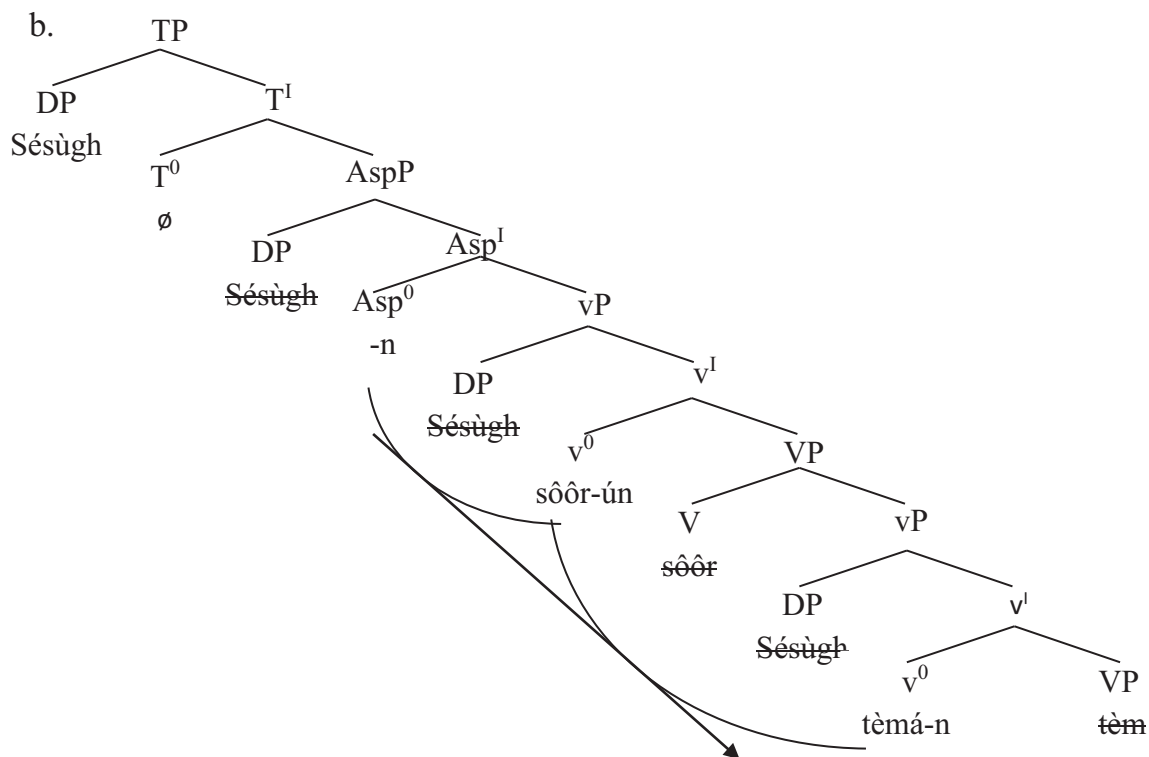
Sequel to the above analysis, it can be deducted that this movement is not to the left, but to the right, where the aspect feature lowers to adjoin to the verb. Lowering in the Tiv language finds its ground in distributed morphology, where the adverbs can also possess the aspect marker, as in:

- a. Sésùgh vándè-n vá-n héén  
 Sésùgh before-ImpfvM come-Impfv here  
 Sésùgh has been coming here

From the data above, the perfective marker and the verb both have an aspect marker which can only be derived via lowering, where adjunction is to the right of the head and not to the left as proposed by Kayne (1994, 1991). If raising was to be employed it would be an instance of re-extraction, where both the marker and the verb adjoin to the aspect marker: the Tiv language only permits the copying of the affix to viable intervening head and not the complete extraction of the derived complex head.

Taiwo and Angitso (2013b) also submit that SVCs in Tiv share aspect. This aspect sharing can be captured via movement. The aspect head grammatically moves down to the head without flouting the head movement constraint in Tiv such as the imperfective aspect marker in (a) which would be schematized as (b).

- a. Sésùgh sôôr-un tèmá-n  
     Sésùgh repair-ImpfvM sit-ImpfvM  
     Sésùgh sits properly



The schema in (b) above shows the movement the shared imperfective aspect in the serial verbal construction in the Tiv language. The first verb “sôôr” has the vowel “ú” inserted between the last consonant on the root verb and the imperfective aspect marker “-n” because the Tiv language does not allow consonant clusters in words that are not borrowed. Where a seeming consonant cluster is found in the language, it is treated as a double articulation sound.

The movement of the imperfective aspect marker cannot be restricted to the first verb as in (a) below, and it cannot be restricted to the second verb as in (b) below. In a manner (modifying) SVC in Tiv, both verbs must be inflected as in (c) below, while in linking SVC, the only the second verb may be inflected as in (d) below:

- a. \*Sésùgh sôôr-un tèmà  
Sésùgh repair-ImpfvM sit-ImpfvM  
Sésùgh sits properly
- b. \*Sésùgh sôôr tèmá-n  
Sésùgh repair sit-ImpfvM  
Sésùgh sits properly
- c. Sésùgh sôôr-un tèmá-n  
Sésùgh repair-ImpfvM sit-ImpfvM  
Sésùgh sits properly
- d. Sésùgh, kár yèm-én  
Sésùgh, pass go-ImpfvM  
'Sésùgh, pass and be going'

In constructions such as (d) where only the second verb “yèm” is inflected, it would still be worthwhile submitting that the share aspect moves through the first verb “kár” but does not leave a phonetic copy after the affix has been copied to the second verb “yèm”.

### **Deriving Verb > Adverb word order in Tiv: head or non-head movement?**

With the birth of cartographic studies by the minimalist program, word order studies have taken an economic and elegant dimension. It is evident that languages display different word orders, which reconstruction reveals that these orders must have been derived from an underlying word order. For instance, the adverb precedes the verb underlyingly, therefore a word order where the verb precedes the adverb such as French is a result of the movement of the verb to a higher position: T without flouting the head movement constraint. In Tiv, the verb precedes the adverb, and the question that follows is that: is it the verb (as head movement) that moves or the verb phrase (as non-head movement)? If it is vP movement, is it a full movement or remnant movement.

Prior to the determination of the moving constituent of constituency, it is worthy to state the implication(s) of the result that would be generated. Accepting that the verb moves instead of vP would require the determination of a landing so as to ascertain another form of head movement in addition to T to V and Asp to V movement.

Consider:

- a. Gerald yáv fèlé  
Gerald sleep quick

- b. \*Gerald fèlé yáv  
 Gerald quick sleep  
 ‘Gerald sleep quick’

Reading from the constructions above, the verb is the only constituent that occurs before the adverb. It seems the verb “yáv” is what moved to a higher position to derive (a) from the underlying order (b). Now consider a transitive verb with a saturated argument structure such as “yá” in the Tiv example in (a) and its French counterpart in (b):

- a. M yé kúésé hànma shiè  
 I eat cheese every time  
 I eat cheese always
- b. Je mange toujours ~~mange~~ le fromage  
 I eat always ~~eat~~ the cheese

In (a) above, the verb “yé” and the object “kúésé” precede the adverb “hànma shiè” as opposes to the verb “mange” and object “le fromage” in the French example presented in (b) where the verb precedes the adverb, and the adverb precedes the object. This implies that in the Tiv language, the moved constituent is beyond the verb, but a verb phrase, while in French it is the verb that moves as shown above.

The question that arises after the knowledge that what moves in the Tiv language is a verb phrase is whether this movement is a complete movement or remnant movement. In remnant movement, the arguments would be extracted from the predicate structure before the reminder of the verb would move. In complete movement the entire verb phrase moves before the extraction of the arguments from the predicate structure. This papers submits and shows that remnant movement is what applies in the Tiv language.

First, in the Tiv language, V internal movement takes place before the external merge of the adverb to the verb projection as in:

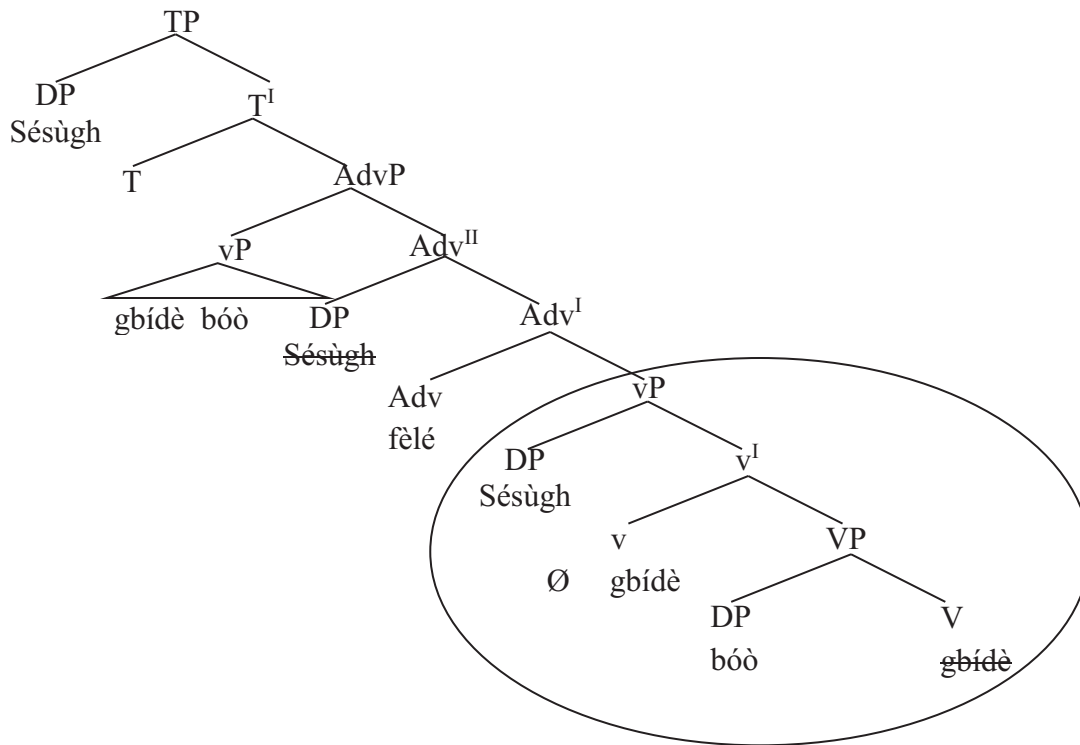
- a. [AdvP Fèlé [vP Sésùgh gbídè [vP bóò ~~gbídè~~]]]  
 [AdvP quickly [vP Sésùgh play [vP ball ~~play~~]]]
- b. \*[AdvP fèlé [vP Sésùgh [vP bóò gbídè]]]  
 \*[AdvP quickly [vP Sésùgh [vP ball play]]]

In (a), vP internal scrambling takes place by the movement of the verb “gbídè” from the lexical projection to adjoin to the light verb, with “Sésùgh” as the subject at the edge of the light verb as the subject, thereby leaving “bóò” at the edge position of the lexical verb projection. This derives the basic underlying word order (predicate structure) of SVO.

Remnant movement is a more viable way of accounting for the verb > adverb order that is identified for the Tiv language. This is because remnant movement takes



care of items that are subject to further movement in the clause structure, so as to avoid freezing<sup>8</sup>, therefore the subject is extracted before the vP is moved since it is moving higher to the edge of T.

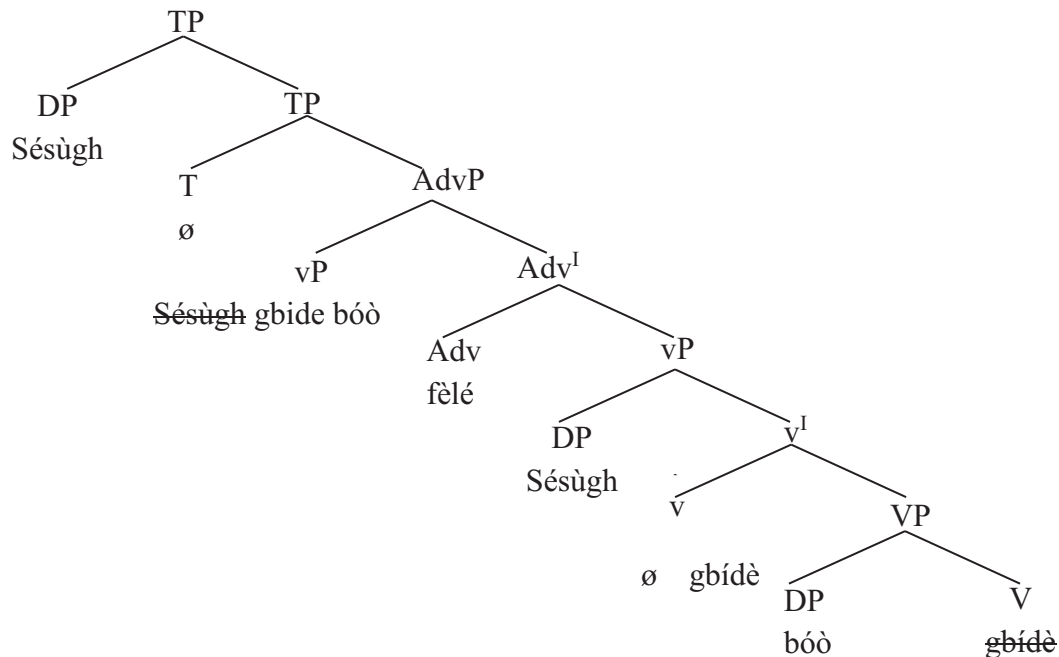


The schema above accounts the verb>adverb order using remnant movement. The transfer of the complement of the phase head *v* is delayed. The external argument “Sésùgh” is extracted from the vP to the edge of the adverb phrase because it is a subpart of the vP. The vP is then extracted to merge to the adverb phrase, above the subject DP “Sésùgh” where it occupies the second edge position of the adverb. In the edge position of the adverb, the entire construction especially the vP is placed within the scope of the adverb.

Movement in the Tiv language hinders sub-extraction of items from those that have been moved. This implies that the vP cannot be moved to the edge of the adverb for the subject to be extracted from it for further scrambling as in:

- a. Sésùgh á            gbídè    bóò    fèlé  
     Sésùgh AgrS.PST   play.PST   ball   quickly  
     Sésùgh played (foot) ball quickly

<sup>8</sup> Once an XP in Tiv is extracted for movement, it becomes inaccessible for sub-extraction which is why it is difficult to find an instance where a moving syntactic object strands another in an intermediate leap between the extraction site and the landing site.



It should be noted that safe for structural principles such as sub-extraction, the schema above is viable since it places the vP within the scope of the adverb by placing it in the edge position of the adverb.

It is however worthy to note that in some constructions, the vP remains in situ and does not have to move but the external argument of the verb moves through the edge of the adverb phrase to get to T. For example:

- a. [TP Sésùgh á vándè [vP Sésùgh yá-n Mángò]]  
 [TP Sésùgh AgrS.PST already [vP Sésùgh eat-ImprvM Mango]]  
 Sésùgh had already eaten Mango
- b. [TP Sésùgh [AdvP nyien [vP Sésùgh ngohol ikyaren]]]  
 [TP Sésùgh [AdvP yesterday [vP Sésùgh collect examination]]]  
 ‘Sésùgh collected his result yesterday’

In the constructions above, the adverb and the verb phrase retain their underlying order of Adverb > verb. However, the external argument “sesugh” makes it to the edge of the T through the edge of “vande” in (a) and “nyien” in (b) respectively.

From the above discussion, head movements such as V to T movement in French which derives the verb > Adverb order is not found in the Tiv language. In deriving the verb > Adverb order in the Tiv language, phrasal movement is employed rather than head movement.

**Conclusion**

In summary, head movement in the forms of T to V movement and Asp to V movement is a potent movement in Tiv, and it shares only a few similarities with phrasal movement. Head movement and phrasal movement cannot be harmonized, neither can head movement be disregarded due to its behavior. Head movement is triggered by morpho-semantic features. The primary purpose is to build larger morphological and semantic units in a construction and therefore affect interpretation. The fact that morpho-semantic features do not satisfy conditions such as extension conditions does not mean it should not be recognized. Head movement takes place before transfer because its semantics has a stake in its syntax and phonetic representation. The noted anti-movement behaviors of head movement are because it is a lower structure movement.

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This paper examines the strategies for marking negation in the Omuanwa dialect of the Ikwere language of Rivers State of Nigeria. It notes that negative elements interact more with verbal categories. Thus, the analysis of negation in this paper is based on the verb forms identified in the dialect in relation to their affirmative counterparts. The paper adopts an eclectic approach in the analysis of negation in the language. It is observed that negation is marked through inflectional affixes, auxiliary verbs and tonal alterations. For instance, tone plays a major role in the formation of negative progressive verb form and negative future verb form as there is no overt negative marker associated with it. The foregoing strategies of negation marking in Ikwere imply that it is rich in morpho-syntactic processes. This paper observes a unique feature in the Omuanwa variety of Ikwere with the neutral form of the action verb in the simple verb form. The neutral form of the action verb, which is used to convey both present habitual meaning and past notion, is marked differently to derive three negative constructions. The three constructions are used to express negative present habitual meaning, negative non-emphatic past meaning and negative emphatic past meaning. This, therefore, demonstrates that negation in Ikwere is not symmetric as there is no one-to-one correspondence between the members of the paradigms used in affirmative and negative constructions.

## 1. Introduction

The Ikwere language is spoken in four out of the twenty-three Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Rivers State of Nigeria, namely, Port Harcourt, Obio/Akpor, Emohua and Ikwerre LGAs. Like Kana, Kalabari and Ekpeye, it is one of the major languages of Rivers State used in broadcasting in the electronic media (Alerechi 2007). Williamson (1988) classifies Ikwere as one of the Igbooid group of languages with other languages like Igbo, Ekpeye, ogba, Echie, to mention but a few. Williamson and Blench (2000) locate Igbooid under the node of West Benue-Congo family of Niger-Congo phylum of languages. The Ikwere language comprises twenty-four divergent dialects, which are mutually intelligible. It is yet to develop a standard dialect. However, there are published works such as Donwa-Ifode and Ekwulo's (1987) *Ikwere Orthography*, *Ṭɛsitamenti Ikne* (a translated New Testament Bible), and some recent scholarly works in the language. This present paper is a description of negation marking in the Ikwere language with a view to documenting the negation strategies employed in the Omuanwa variety of the language.

Negation, as a natural phenomenon in human languages, has been defined as a grammatical term for the process that results in changing an affirmative (positive) sentence or clause into a negative one and is sometimes known as a contrast in ‘polarity’ (Mc Arthur,



1992). Crystal (1997:257) defines negation as ‘a process or construction in grammatical and semantic analysis which typically expresses the contradiction of some or all of a sentence’s meaning’. In fact, Lyons (1977:768) says that ‘a negative proposition is an equivalent to the denial of the corresponding positive proposition’. In the literature, scholars have identified different types of negation in course of discussing the strategies employed in negating utterances in languages. Payne (1985) recognizes ‘standard negation’ as a form of negation different from other forms. According to Miestamo (2007), standard negation can be characterized as the basic means that languages have for negating declarative clauses. A distinction is also made between morphological negation and syntactic negation as proposed by Dahl (1979), where, on the one hand, the morphological negation comprises prefixes, suffixes, circumfixes, prosodic and reduplicative negations, and on the other hand, the syntactic negation involves a negative marker, which may be an uninflected particle or auxiliary verb, etc. (Miestamo 2007). Negation can also be categorized based on predicate negation (also known as sentential negation) and constituent negation. As varied as negation types may be in languages of the world, it is noted in this paper that negation marking in Ikwere is rich in morpho-syntactic processes.

The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to describe the process of deriving negation in the Omuanwa variety of Ikwere. It identifies the basic characteristic of negation marking in the language.

## **2. Methodology**

The data used in analyzing negation in Ikwere are based on the Omuanwa variety, one out of the 24 dialects of Ikwere. References to the forms of some other lects and relevant materials are also cited, where necessary. The data were collected based on the perception of Ikwere native speech through interaction and the intuitive knowledge of the researcher. She also consulted other native speakers in order to cross-check and to confirm forms that are doubtful. The data were analyzed using an eclectic approach. It is an approach involving models of description, which have been built from a combination of features originating in more than one linguistic theory, (Crystal 1997:130). The data used in analyzing negation in this paper are represented orthographically and vowel nasalization in the language is symbolized by inserting the letter ‘n’ between the consonant and vowel of the affected syllable.

## **3. Negation in Omuanwa**

This section treats some of the ways negation is expressed in the Omuanwa variety of Ikwere. It demonstrates how negation is characterized in different verb forms as well as in constituent negation with a view to identifying the strategies employed to derive negative constructions in the language.

### **3.1 Negation and Verb Forms**

It is observed that in Ikwere, negative elements interact more with verbal categories. Thus, the analysis of negation in this paper is based on the verb forms identified in the language in relation to their affirmative counterparts. A verb form is the combination of such verbal

categories as tense and aspect in a specific mood. Ukata (1981:5) sees it as the ‘particular shape of the verb occurring in a specific aspect of a mood, including all its affixes, distinct from that occurring in another aspect of the same mood or the same aspect in another mood’. Alerechi (1987) observes that there is no clear-cut tense system in Ikwere but emphasis is laid on the starting or finishing point of an action or state of affairs. For instance, the past indicates that the action or state of affairs is finished, while the inceptive form denotes the beginning of an action. The starting or finishing point combines with the aspect in a specific mood to derive a verb form. Thus, aspect rather than tense is prominent in Ikwere. The verb forms that are considered in this paper are simple, habitual, progressive, perfect, and future forms.

### 3.1.1 The Simple Verb Form

The simple verb form occurs in the indicative and the imperative moods. The simple indicative distinguishes the neutral form from the past form.

#### The Neutral Form

The neutral form of the affirmative construction is not morphologically marked since there is no overt morpheme associated with it. It is made up of both stative verbs and action verbs. While the stative verb is used to convey present meaning as in sentences (1a) and (2a), the action verb of the neutral form is used to denote a present habitual meaning and past meaning as demonstrated in all the (a) examples in (3a) to (8a). This implies that a particular surface structure of the neutral form of an action verb is used to convey dual semantic notions in the affirmative construction. In the formation of the negative counterpart of the neutral form, the Omuanwa variety of Ikwere employs the following strategies:

- a. The stative verb conveying present meaning is marked with negative morpheme – V comprising the allomorphs **-è,-a,-ò,-ɔ** as in (b) of examples (1) and (2). The choice of each of the allomorphs is determined by the expanded and rounded harmony features of the verb root. Thus, the non-high front vowel suffix **-è/-a** is attached to the front expanded or non-expanded vowel of the verb root, respectively, while the non-high back vowel suffix **-ò/-ɔ** is used, if the vowel of the verb root is a back rounded expanded or non-expanded vowel, respectively.
- b. The action verb expressing negative present habitual meaning is marked in the same way as in (1) above as demonstrated in (b) of examples (3) to (8).
- c. The action verb denoting negative non-emphatic past meaning is marked with the negative allomorphs **-lê/-lâ** or **-nê/-nâ**. While **-lê/-lâ** is subject to expanded harmony feature of the vowel of the verb root, **-nê/-nâ** is the choice if it is preceded by a nasal segment or a nasalized segment. Consider examples all (c) examples in (3) to (8).

- d. The action verb expressing negative emphatic past meaning is characterized with the inherent negative auxiliary verb **mê/ mǎ**, the choice of over the other is subject to the expanded harmony feature of the vowel of the following verb root. It co-occurs with the harmonizing prefix **-è/-à**, in all (d) examples in (3) to (8). Consider examples 1-8.
- 1a) Ọ dĩ mkpụmkpu  
(3scl be short) 'S(He) is short'
- b) Ọ dĩ=a mkpụmkpu  
(3scl be=Neg short) 'S(He) is not short'
- 2a) Awhna a bụ Udno  
(name 3scl be Udno) 'His/Her name is Udno'
- b) Awhna a bụ=ọ Udno  
(name 3scl be=Neg Udno) 'His/Her name is not Udno'
- 3a) Ọ vù èkpèrĩ  
(3scl carry basket) 'S(He) carries/carried the basket'
- b) Ọ vù=ò èkpèrĩ  
(3scl carry=Neg basket) 'S(He) does not carry the basket'
- c) Ọ vù=¹lê èkpèrĩ  
(3scl carry=Neg basket) (Non-Emphatic) 'S(He) did not carry the basket'
- d) Ọ mê è=vù èkpèrĩ  
(3sclAux/Neg pr=carry basket) (Emphatic) 'S(He) did not carry the basket'
- 4a) Ọ sù édè  
(3scl pound cocoyam) 'S(He) pounds/pounded the cocoyam'
- b) Ọ sù=ò édè  
(3scl pound=Neg cocoyam) 'S(He) does not pound the cocoyam'
- c) Ọ sù=¹lâ édè  
(3scl pound=Neg cocoyam) (Non-Emphatic) 'S(He) did not pound the cocoyam'
- d) Ọ mâ à=sù édè  
(3scl Aux/Neg pr=pound cocoyam) (Emphatic) 'S(He) did not pound the cocoyam'

- 
- 5a) Àdná kpè m̀bàl̀àkà  
(Pr N peel cassava) 'Adna peels/peeled the cassava'
- b) Àdná kpé=è m̀bàl̀àkà  
(PrN peel=Neg cassava) 'Adna does not peel the cassava'
- c) Àdná kpé=¹lê m̀bàl̀àkà  
(Pr N peel=Neg cassava) (Non-Emphatic)  
'Adna did not peel the cassava'
- d) Àdná mē è=kpe m̀bàl̀àkà  
(Pr N Aux/Neg pr= peel cassava) (Emphatic)  
'Adna did not peel the cassava'
- 6a) Ò gbà á¹jnà  
(3scl tip sand) 'S(He) tips/tipped the sand'
- b) Ò gbá=à àjnà  
(3scl tip=Neg sand) 'S(He) does not tip the sand'
- c) Ò gbá=¹lâ àjnà  
(3scl tip=Neg sand) (Non-Emphatic)  
'S(He) did not tip the sand'
- d) Ò mâ à=gbá á¹jnà  
(3scl Aux/Neg pr= tip sand) (Emphatic)  
'S(He) did not tip the sand'
- 7a) Úrù jnè áhíà  
(PrN go market) 'Uru goes/went to the market'
- b) Úrù jné=è àhíà  
(Pr N go=Neg market) 'Uru does not go to the market'
- c) Úrù jné=¹nê àhíà  
(Pr N go= Neg market) 'Uru did not go to the market'
- d) Úrù mé è=jné á¹hià  
(Pr N Aux/Neg pr=go market) (Emphatic)  
'Uru did not go to the market'
- 8a) Ùdnó rnù àchàrà  
(PrN weed grass) 'Udno weeds/weeded the grasses'
- b) Ùdnó rnù =ò àchàrà  
(PrN weed=Neg grass) 'Udno does not weed the grasses'
- c) Ùdnó rnù =¹nâ àchàrà  
(PrN weed=Neg grass) 'Udno did not weed the grasses'

- d) Ûdnó mâ à=rnú àchàrà  
(Pr N Aux/Neg pr=weed grass) 'Udno did not weed the grasses'

We can infer the following from the data (1) to (8):

- a. The verb root and the noun object in all the (b) and (c) examples in (3) to (8) consistently take high and low tone, respectively, irrespective of their inherent tone pattern.
- b. The negative allomorphs **-è,-à,-ò,-ò** , which expresses a negative present state of affairs or a negative present habitual action retains its original low tone pattern.
- c. The negative allomorphs **-lê,-lâ, -nê** or **-nâ** is used to express a negative non-emphatic past action.
- d. The negative auxiliary verb **mê** or **mâ** combined with the prefix **è-/â-**, attached to the root of the verb is used to convey a more emphatic action than that in (3) above
- e. The neutral simple indicative verb form in the affirmative construction is unmarked in the surface structure.
- f. While the derivation of the negative neutral form of the stative verb seems straightforward, that of the action verb is somewhat ambiguous and complex. Thus, a particular surface structure of an action verb, which denotes both present habitual meaning and past meaning in affirmative construction could be negated to derive:
  - i. Negative present habitual meaning
  - ii. Negative non-emphatic past meaning
  - iii. Negative emphatic past meaning (used in reported speech to imply that the response should have been on the affirmative).
- g. Point (6) above is a proof that negation in Ikwere is not symmetric as there is no one-to-one correspondence between the members of the paradigms used in affirmative and negative constructions.

Some of the stative verbs are marked with **-rV** assertive suffix. The **-rV** assertive suffix (considered here as **-rV1**) is the suffix that only affirms what is stated by the verb (Uwalaka 1981). In Ikwere (Omuanwa), the **-rV1** may be retained or deleted when the verb root admits the negative suffix. An interesting observation with the **-rV1** is that whereas it is attached to the verb root when expressing negative present notion, it is automatically deleted when expressing a negative past meaning with the negative auxiliary marker **mê** or **mâ** and vice versa. See examples (9) to (11).

- 9a) Ò bù=rù ò<sup>+</sup>má  
(3scl be=rV1 fine) 'It is fine'
- b) Ò bú=ò òmà  
(3scl be=Neg fine) 'It is not fine'

- 
- d) Ọ mâ à=bú=rú ọ́<sup>↓</sup>má  
(3scl Aux/Negpr= be=rV1 fine) ‘It was not fine’
- 10a) Ọgè mà=rnà ní<sup>↓</sup>má  
(Pr N beauty(become)=rV1 beautiful) ‘Oge is beautiful’
- b) Ọgè má=rnà=à m̀mà  
(Pr N beauty(become)=rV1=Neg beautiful) ‘Oge is not beautiful’
- c) Ọgè mâ à=má ní<sup>↓</sup>má  
(Pr N Aux/Neg pr=beauty(become) beautiful) ‘Oge is not beautiful’
- 11a) Ọ vù=rù ívù  
(3scl fat(become)=rV1 fat) ‘S(He) is fat’
- b) Ọ vù=rù=ò ìvù  
(3scl fat(become)=rV1=Neg fat) ‘S(He) is not fat’
- c) Ọ mē è=vù ìvù  
(3scl Aux/Neg pr= fat(become fat)) ‘S(He) was not fat’

While examples (9b) and (9c) demonstrate the deletion and the retention of the –rV1, respectively, and (10b) and (11b) show its retention, (10c) and (11c) reflect the loss of the –rV1 suffix. Note that the ‘n’ in -**rnà** of (10a) and (10b) is used orthographically to indicate nasalization. This implies that the V of -rV1 is nasalized when it is preceded by a nasal or nasalized segment.

### The Past Form

The past form of the simple indicative occurs only in the stative verb. It is formed by attaching the –rV past suffix ( here after –rV2) to the neutral form to denote that a state of affairs is finished. To negate it, the negative suffix -**â** is added to the –rV2 past marker, in addition to tonal modifications. It is necessary at this juncture, to point out that Ikwere naturally has a homophonic –rV suffix, which perform functions such as assertive (-rV1) and past (-rV2) meaning. The V of the –rV1 or –rV2 is a copy of the vowel of the root. See examples 12:

- 12a) Ọchĩ dĩ=rĩ n’ áhiá  
(Pr N be=PT Prep market) ‘Ochi was in the market’
- b) Ọchĩ dĩ=í<sup>↓</sup>rí=â n’ áhiá  
(Pr N be=PT=Neg Prep market) ‘Ochi was not in the market’



Consider the ways some Ikwere dialects mark negation in the simple indicative verb form in table 1.

| Lects    | Negative Markers          |                                                                                                     |
|----------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|          | Present                   | Past                                                                                                |
| Akpo     | <b>-ĩ, -lè/-là, -sĩsĩ</b> | <b>-lè/-là/-nè</b>                                                                                  |
| Igwuruta | <b>-gwùò</b>              | <b>-lè/-là, -nè/-nà</b>                                                                             |
| Obio     | <b>-ò</b>                 | <b>-là,</b>                                                                                         |
| Ogbakiri | <b>-è/-à/-ò/-ò</b>        | <b>-lè/-lẹ</b>                                                                                      |
| Omuanwa  | <b>-è/-à/-ò/-ò</b>        | a) <b>-lè/-là, -nè /-nâ</b> (suffix)<br>b) <b>me/mă</b> (auxiliary) + <b>-è/- â</b> -prefix<br>c) â |

In Ikwere, the subject of an imperative construction is not overtly expressed in the surface structure except when the subject is plural. In the formation of the negative imperative, however, the language obligatorily marks the subject pronoun, which consistently bears high tone pattern. In addition, the Omuanwa dialect uses the negative allomorphs, **-è**, **-à**, **-ò**, **-ò̃**, suffixed to the verb host to signal negation. We recall that these allomorphs have been identified as characteristic of the simple indicative when expressing negative present meaning. Note also that the neutral form of the simple imperative can occur in isolation as a complete utterance. Examples are given in (13) to (17):

- 13a) Là( ọ̀rò)! ‘Go( home)!’  
 b) Í là=à (ọ̀rò)  
 (2scl/Neg go=Neg home) ‘Don’t go (home)!’

- 
- 14a) Tĩ ọlà!  
(shout shout) ‘Shout!’
- b) Í tĩ=è ọlà  
(2scl/Neg shout/Neg shout) ‘Don’t shout’
- 15a) Vù ọnù  
(carry mouth) ‘Fast!’
- b) Í vù=ò ọnù  
(2scl/Neg carry=Neg mouth) ‘Don’t fast!’
- 16a) Tù àlì  
(dig ground) ‘Dig the ground/soil’
- b) Í tù=ò àlì  
(2scl/Neg dig=Neg ground) ‘Don’t dig the ground’
- 17a) Ánị ̀rnú árnú  
(2pl work work) ‘You (plural) work!’
- b) Ánị́ rnù=ò árnú  
(2pl work=Neg work) ‘You (plural) don’t work!’

One may quickly want to jump to a conclusion here that the Ikwere negative imperative marker is a circumfix (a discontinuous affix that surrounds the verb root) as in **Í=tĩ=è** ‘don’t shout’, suggesting that it could be an accidental resemblance between the first part of the circumfix and the second person pronoun. This couldn’t have been the case as it is observed that other personal pronouns could also be the subject of an imperative construction (affirmative or negative) in Ikwere, when a command is issued to a third party through the second person. Consider example 18.

- 18a) Kwu=ni a sị o ti ọla  
(Say=prep 3scl that 3scl shout shout) ‘Tell him/her that s(he) should shout!’
- b) Kwu=ni a sị o ti=e ọla  
(Say=prep 3scl that 3scl shout=Neg shout) ‘Tell him/her that s(he) should not shout!’

The foregoing shows that the negative imperative form in Omuanwa is marked with an obligatory second person subject pronoun and the negative suffix

### 3.1.2 The Habitual and Negation

The habitual indicative has both the neutral and the past forms. The neutral form may be characterized with the habitual suffix marker **-kò** or may be unmarked in its surface structure as in all the (a) examples in (3) to (8). The **-kò** form is more emphatic than the unmarked form. Thus, **-kò** carries extra information of emphasis, which is why it is different from the forms which does not have the form **'-kò**. The past forms is formed by attaching the -rV2 to the verb root of the neutral form. To negate the unmarked and marked neutral forms, the **-V** negative suffix observed in all (b) examples in (3) to (8) is added to the verb of the affirmative form. See examples (19) to (22). The strategy adopted in the negation of the past habitual form is that of affix hopping movement. Thus, the -rV2 detaches from the verb root (the original host), moves leftward and gets attached to the negative auxiliary verb **ma** of the unmarked and the marked forms as well as tonal modifications.

- 19a) Ézè jnè úbĩ  
(Pr N go farm) 'Eze goes to the farm'
- b) Ézè jné=è ùbĩ  
(Pr N go=Neg farm) 'Eze does not go to the farm'
- 20a) Ézè jnè=rè úbĩ  
(Pr N go=past farm) 'Eze used to go to the farm'
- b) Ézè ma =rna è=jnë úbĩ  
(Pr N Aux/Neg=PT pr= go farm) 'Eze did not use to go to the farm'
- 21a) Ò rĩ=kò òsná  
(3scl eat=Hab squirrel) 'S(He) eats the squirrel'
- b) Ò rí=è òsnà  
(3scl eat=Neg squirrel) 'S(He) does not eat the squirrel'
- 22a) Ò rĩ=kò=rò òsná  
(3scl eat=Hab=PT squirrel) 'S(He) used to eat the squirrel'
- b) Ò ma =rna è=rí ọ sna  
(3scl Aux/Neg=Hab=PT pr=eat squirrel) 'S(He) did not use to eat the squirrel'

All the (b) examples in (19) and (22) demonstrate that the emphasis in the marked neutral forms of the negative habitual is neutralized as the **-kò** of the marked neutral form is deleted in the negative construction. This means that the unmarked and marked habitual verb forms are identical. It is interesting to note that the habitual marker is invariant irrespective of the

- The verb root in the affirmative changes from low tone to high tone in the negative construction.
- The noun complement or object takes low (low) tone pattern in the negative construction, irrespective of the inherent tone pattern.

Table 2: Negative Habitual Markers

Table 2 shows the different ways negative habitual is marked in the Ikwere dialects. While the negative habitual is characterized with inflectional suffixes and tonal alterations in Akpo and Omuanwa, and with only tonal changes in Igwuruta, it is marked with the auxiliary verb **zīgá** in Obio. Omuanwa also uses auxiliary to mark the negative past habitual.

The progressive indicative is used to refer to an action going on at the moment of speaking. It is marked with the suffix **-gà** for the present time action of the neutral form. The neutral form is distinguished from the past form by attaching the **-rV2** to the **-gà** of the neutral form. Unlike the simple negative and habitual constructions in the preceding sections, which are marked with inflectional affixes as well as tonal modifications, the negative progressive is only signaled by tonal alteration as shown in (23) to (26).

- 23a) Kèlé      tè=gà      úsnè  
(Pr N    pound=Prog pepper)      ‘Kele is pounding pepper’
- b) Kèlé      té=gà      ùsnè  
(Pr N    pound=Prog/Neg pepper)      ‘Kele is not pounding the pepper’
- 24a) Ọ      zù=gà      úwó  
(3scl    buy=Prog cloth)      ‘S(He) is buying the cloth’

- b) Ọ zú=gà ùwò  
(3scl buy=Prog/Neg cloth) ‘S(He) is not buying the cloth’
- 25a) Ọ rĩ=gà ní  
(3scl eat=Prog food) ‘S(He) is eating the food’
- b) Ọ rí=gà òrĩ  
(3scl eat=Prog/Neg food) ‘S(He) is not eating the food’
- 26a) Ọchĩ gnù=gà=rà érí  
(PrN sing=Prog=PT song) ‘Ochi was singing’
- b) Ọchĩ gnù=↓gá=rà èrĩ  
(PrN sing=Prog=PT/Neg song) ‘Ochi was not singing’

All the (a) examples in (23) to (26) demonstrate that the verbal morphemes of the progressive indicative are consistently marked low, while the verb root changes to high tone in the negative constructions in all the (b) examples in (23) to (26). The progressive and past markers in the negative construction, however, change to down step high and fall, respectively, as in (26b). Thus, tone, plays a major role in the formation of negative constructions. Some other dialects, however, mark negative progressive with auxiliary verb as illustrated in table 3.

Table 3: *Negative Progressive Markers*

| <i>Lects</i> | <i>Negative Progressive Markers</i> |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| Akpo         | zínè                                |
| Igwuruta     | Tonal changes                       |
| Obio         | zígá aux.                           |
| Ogbakiri     | zìè aux                             |
| Omuanwa      | Tonal change                        |

Table 3 demonstrates that while other dialects derive their negative construction by using auxiliary verb to negate the progressive affirmative sentences, Igwuruta and Omuanwa use tonal modification

### 3.1.4 The Perfective and Negation

The Omuanwa dialect of Ikweré attests both the neutral and the inceptive form of the perfective indicative. It is used to express an action or event that occurred in a definite time in the past. The neutral is marked with the inflectional allomorphs **-lé/-lá** or **-né/-ná** in the affirmative construction. It is noted that this affix is different from that used in marking the negative non-emphatic past neutral form of the simple indicative. The occurrence of the

allomorphs is dependent on the expanded or nasal features of the verb root. While retaining the perfective marker, the negative perfective form is formed by a combination of the harmonizing negative auxiliary verb **mè/mà** and **è-/à-** prefix, which is attached to the verb root. This is quite unlike in Igbo where perfective marker is deleted in the negative construction (Ndimele 2009). The tone of the perfective marker is, however, modified from high tone of the affirmative constructions to falling tone in the negative counterparts.

Consider (27) to (29).

- 27a) Àchĩ ré=lé á<sup>+</sup>tù  
(Pr N sell=Perf chewing stick) 'Achi has sold the chewing stick'
- b) Àchĩ mè è=ré =<sup>+</sup>lê àtù  
(PrN Aux/Neg pr=sell =Perf/Neg chewingstick) 'Achi has not sold the chewingstick'
- 28a) Úrè mù=ná ọ̀<sup>+</sup>gnú  
(Pr N learn=Perf counting) 'Ure has learnt counting'
- b) Úrè mà à=mù=<sup>+</sup>nâ ọ̀gnù  
(Pr N Aux/Neg pr= learn=Perf/Neg counting) 'Ure has not learnt counting'
- 29a) Ọ zà=lá ọ̀rò  
(3scl sweep=Perf house) 'S(He) has swept the house'
- b) Ọ mà à=zà=<sup>+</sup>lâ ọ̀rò  
(3scl Aux/Neg Pr=sweep=perf-Neg house) 'S(He) has not swept the house'

It is observed from all the (b) examples in (27) to (29) that the negative perfective form is marked by the following:

- The auxiliary verb **mV**, whose vowel is identical with the harmonizing prefix **è-/ à-**, attached to the verb root.
- Tonal modification: while the verb root in the negative construction is always high irrespective of its inherent tone pattern, the high tone of the perfective marker changes to a falling tone. This is an indication that the low component of the falling tone signals negation and that the aspectual marker is the host of negation.
- The noun object changes to low tone pattern irrespective of its inherent tone pattern
- The rule of tonal modification of the verb root and the noun object applies vacuously. If the verb root is high in the affirmative construction, it is high in the negative counterpart and if the post-verbal noun is low in the affirmative, it is also low in the negative construction.



The inceptive form of the perfective indicative is characterized with the combination of the verb root, the inceptive suffix **-bè/-bè** ‘started’ and perfective suffix **-lè/-lè**. The inceptive perfective is used to show that an action has started before a definite time in the past. Apart from the inceptive marker which changes to a down step high in the negative construction, the negative inceptive perfective is similar to that of the negative neutral perfective in tonal behaviour, as shown in examples (30)-(32);

- 30a) Ò sè=bè=lé ákwà  
(3scl draw=Incep= Perf egg) ‘S(He) has started drawing the egg’
- b) Ò mè è=sé=ʼbé=lê àkwà  
(3scl Aux/Neg pr=draw=Incep= Perf/egg) ‘S(He) has not started drawing the egg’
- 31a) Ọ́nú lá=bè=lé ọ̀rò  
(Pr N go=Incep=Perf house) ‘Onu has started going to the house’
- b) Ọ́nú mà à=lá=ʼbé=lê ọ̀rò  
(Pr N Aux/Neg pr=go=Incep=Perf/Neg house) ‘Onu has not started going to the house’
- 32a) Úrè ré=bè=lé jí  
(PrN sell=Incep=Perf yam) ‘Ure has started selling the yam’
- b) Úrè mè è=ré=ʼbé=lê jĩ  
(Pr N Aux/Neg pr=sell=Incep=Perf yam) ‘Ure has started selling the yam’

Table 4: *Negative Perfective Markers*

| <i>Lects</i> | <i>Negative Perfective Markers</i>                                 |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Akpo         | - lè/ -là                                                          |
| Igwuruta     | yV (Harmonizing auxiliary verb)                                    |
| Obio         | yV (Harmonizing auxiliary verb)                                    |
| Ogbakiri     | yV (Harmonizing auxiliary verb) with the negative suffix <b>-è</b> |
| Omuanwa      | a) mV(harmonizing auxiliary) with V-prefix<br>b) Tonal change      |

### 3.1.5 The Future and Negation

The future indicative in Ikwere has both the neutral and the inceptive forms. The neutral form is marked with **dè** or **dà** and the prefix **è-/à-** attached to the verb root, which is subject to expanded vowel harmony feature of the verb root. To negate the neutral future indicative, the low tone of the future auxiliary verb changes to high tone with no morphological

negative marker. By implication, the auxiliary verb bears the burden of negation in the neutral future form. See examples (33) to (35).

- 33a) Ézè dà à=tá á<sup>↓</sup>tû  
(PrN FUT pr=chew chewing stick) ‘Eze will chew the chewing stick’
- b) Ézè dá à=tá á<sup>↓</sup>tû  
(PrN FUT/Neg pr=chew chewing stick) ‘Eze will not chew the chewingstick’
- 34a) Ò dè è=rí míní  
(3scl FUT pr=drink water) ‘S(He) will drink water’
- b) Ò de è=rí míní  
(3scl FUT/Neg pr=drink water) ‘S(He) will drink water’
- 35a) Wè dà à=tú í<sup>↓</sup>shí  
(3pl FUT pr= plait head) ‘They will plait their hair’
- b) Wè dá à=tú í<sup>↓</sup>shí  
(3pl FUT/Neg pr=plait head) ‘They will not plait their hair’

Examples (33) to (35) demonstrate that the constituents of both the affirmative and the negative constructions retain their inherent tone patterns except the future marker that changes from low tone in the affirmative constructions to high tone in their negative counterparts.

The inceptive form, which is used to denote an action or a state of affairs that will begin at a definite time in future, is formed by a combination of the future marker **dè** or **dà**, the principal verb and the inceptive marker **-bé**. The negative counterpart of the inceptive future affirmative is formed by the alteration of the tone of the future marker as in that of the negative neutral future. See examples (36) to (38):

- 36a) Wè dà à=lù=bé ògnù  
(3pl FUT pr=fight=Incep fight) ‘They will start fighting’
- b) Wè dá à=lù=bé ògnù  
(3pl FUT/Neg pr=fight=Incep fight) ‘They will start fighting’
- 37a) Ógè dè è=vú=<sup>↓</sup>bé ígbé  
(PrN FUT pr=carry=Incep box) ‘Oge will start carrying the box’
- b) Ógè dé è=vú=<sup>↓</sup>bé ígbé  
(Pr N FUT(Neg) pr= carry=Incep box) ‘Oge will not start carrying the box’

- 38a) Ì dà à=snú=ʋbé ọnú  
(2scl FUT pr= wash=Incep mouth) ‘You (sg) will not start washing your mouth’
- b) Ì dá à=snú=ʋbé ọnú  
(2scl FUT(Neg) pr=wash=Incep mouth) ‘You (sg) will start washing your mouth’

Table 5: *Negative Future Markers*

| <i>Lects</i> | <i>Negative Future Markers</i> |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Akpo         | bé (Auxiliary)                 |
| Igwuruta     | Tonal change                   |
| Obio         | bV(harmonizing auxiliary)      |
| Ogbakiri     | -è                             |
| Omuanwa      | Tonal change                   |

Table 5 shows the different ways Ikwere dialects mark negation. While Igwuruta and Omuanwa employ the use of tonal alterations; and Akpo and Obio use auxiliary verb, Ogbakiri adopts an inflectional modification.

### Discussion

From the analysis so far, negation in the Omuanwa variety of Ikwere reveals the different strategies Omuanwa dialect of Ikwere employs to signal negation. It reflects a morpho-syntactic process, which agrees with Dahl’s (1979) proposal of the typology of negation where the basic distinction is between morphological negation and syntactical negation. The morphological feature of negation in Omuanwa dialect involve the use of

#### 1) *Suffixes* such as

##### a) The negative allomorphs-è/-à/-ò/-ò

These allomorphs are suffixed to the verb root to express negative present meaning, negative present and negative past habitual meaning and for negative imperative constructions.

##### b) The negative markers-îê/-lâ/-nê /-nâ

The Omunwa dialect uses these suffixes to convey negative non-emphatic past notion.

##### c) - a: This suffix is specifically used to denote a negative past state of affairs.

#### 2) *Prosodic Negation*

##### a. The negative allomorphs observed in (1a-c) above also trigger off tonal alterations on some constituents of a given negative construction. Generally, the verb root of negative construction in the Omuanwa variety of Ikwere is marked

with high tone irrespective of the inherent tone pattern, while the noun object or complement takes low (low) tone pattern. However, there are few exceptions like that of the negative future construction where the noun object takes its inherent tone pattern. Thus, tone plays a supportive role in the negation of certain verb forms as other negative markers are associated with it.

- b. Tone also plays a major role in the negation of verb forms such as the progressive indicative and the future indicative. This implies that the marking of a particular tone on a syllable can be used to distinguish an affirmative construction from its negative counterpart. While the verbal morphemes of the affirmative progressive construction consistently take low tone, the verb roots of the negative counterpart change to a high tone. The progressive and the past markers of the negative past progressive, in addition, change to down step high and falling tone, respectively. For the future indicative verb form, the future auxiliary verb is consistently marked high in the negative construction contrary to the affirmative one that takes low tone. Thus, indicating that the auxiliary verb bears the burden of negation in the future verb form.

- 3) Syntactically, the dialect records negative auxiliary verb **me** or **ma**, which take different tone patterns depending on the verb form in question.

### 3.2 Constituent Negation

Constituent negation involves the re-arrangement of the word order of the affirmative construction so as to bring to the relevant position the constituent that is being negated. Ndimele (1995) and (2006) observe that the type of focus involved in constituent negation is contrastive focus, since it is geared towards correcting false information. In Ikwere (Omuanwa), constituent negation is formed through the introduction of the periphrastic negative element (**ò**) **díà** 'it is not' to the affirmative construction irrespective of the type of verb form that is used. Observe the examples in (39) to (43).

- 39a) Ézè gwù ònà  
(PrN dig three leaf-yam) 'Eze harvests/harvested three-leaf-yam'
- b) Ézè dí=à ònà ó gwù  
(PrN be=Neg three-leaf-yam 3scl dig) 'Eze did not harvest any three-leaf-yam'
- c) Ò dí=à ònà É<sup>↓</sup>zé gwù  
(3scl be=Neg three-leafyamPr N dig) 'There isn't any three-leaf-yam Eze harvested'
- 40a) Ézè gwù=gà ònà  
(PrN dig=Prog three leaf-yam) 'Eze is harvesting the three-leaf-yam'

- b) Ézè dí=à ọ̀nà ó gwù=gà  
(PrN be=Neg three-leaf-yam 3scl dig=Prog) ‘Eze is not harvesting any three-leaf-yam’
- c) Ọ dí=à ọ̀nà É↓zé gwù=gà  
(3scl be=Neg three-leaf-yam Pr N dig=Prog) ‘There isn’t any three-leaf-yam Eze is harvesting’
- 41a) Ézè gwú=lé ọ̀nà  
(PrN dig=Perf three leaf-yam) ‘Eze has harvested the three-leaf-yam’
- b) Ézè dí=à ọ̀nà ó gwú=lé  
(Pr N be=Neg three-leaf-yam 3scl dig=Perf) ‘Eze has not harvested any three-leaf-yam’
- c) Ọ dí=à ọ̀nà É↓zé gwú=lé  
(3scl be=Neg three-leaf-yam Pr N dig=Perf) ‘There isn’t any three-leaf-yam Eze has harvested’
- 42a) Ézè dè è=gwú ọ̀nà  
(PrN Fut pr=dig three leaf-yam) ‘Eze will harvest the three-leaf-yam’
- b) Ézè dí=à ọ̀nà ó dè è=gwù  
(Pr N be=Neg three-leaf-yam 3scl FutPr=dig) ‘Eze will not harvest any three-leaf-yam’
- c) Ọ dí=à ọ̀nà É↓zé dè è=gwù  
(3scl be=Neg three-leaf-yam Pr N FUT Pr dig) ‘There isn’t any three-leaf-yam Eze will harvest’
- 43a) Ógè dĩ ímé  
(PrN be pregnant) ‘Oge is pregnant’
- b) Ógè dí=à ímé ọ dĩ  
(PrN be=Neg pregnant 3scl be) ‘Oge isn’t at all pregnant’
- c) Ọ dí=à ímé Ó↓gé dĩ  
(3scl be=Neg pregnant Pr N be) ‘Oge is not at all pregnant’

All the (b) and (c) examples in (35) to (39) illustrate that the introduction of the periphrastic element triggers off the movement of the relevant constituent in the affirmative construction right to the element. Sentences (b) in examples (35) to (39) consistently record the introduction of the third person resumptive pronoun whenever the periphrastic element is inserted after the subject of the sentence.

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**4. Conclusion**

This paper has been able to show the different strategies employed to derive negative constructions in the Omuanwa variety of Ikwere. It observed that negation marking in the dialect is rich in morpho-syntactic process. Thus, negation is achieved through inflectional affixes, auxiliary verb, tonal alterations, among others. In fact, tone plays a supportive role in the formation of certain negative constructions as it is associated with other negative markers. It also plays a major role in some others as tone alone is used to distinguish an affirmative construction from the negative counterpart.



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## 43. Focus Constructions in Ọwọ̀n-Ọ̀gè

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This paper examines focus constructions in Ọwọ̀n-Ọ̀gè, a language spoken in the Àkókó North-west of Ondo State in Nigeria. The research is undertaken to establish the strategies for focusing in Ọwọ̀n-Ọ̀gè. To begin with, the paper gives a detailed description of the different constituents that may be focused in the language and observed that Ọwọ̀n-Ọ̀gè uses a morpheme “úwọ̀n” as a focus marker. Adopting the theory of Principles and Parameters (Chomsky 1981, 1982, 1991, Chomsky and Lasnik 1991), the paper examines the changes that take place within a clause whenever a movement transformation is applied. It was found out that there is always a change in the pronunciation of the verb whenever its object is moved for focusing. The paper concludes by proposing Kiss (1998) focus phrase analysis for the focus structure in Ọwọ̀n-Ọ̀gè.

**Key words:** *focus phrase, movement transformation, focus marker*

### 1. Introduction

Ọwọ̀n-Ọ̀gè, the language of study, according to Brown and Ogilvie (2009) is a member of the Defoid sub-group of the Niger-Congo family. The language is spoken by the Ọ̀gè people in Ọ̀kè-Agbè, Àkókó North-west of Ondo state in Nigeria. Ọ̀gè shares boundary with Àfá, Ìdò, Àjè, Ọ̀muò-Èkitì and Oyín. Based on Capo's (1989) classification, Àmgbè is a name proposed for the Northern Akokoid speech forms spoken in Arigidi, Oyín, Urò, Ìgáshí, and all of the four quarters in Ọ̀kè-Agbè of which Ọ̀gè is one. Published research work on Ọ̀wồn-Ọ̀gè is focused on the comparative study of Ọ̀wồn-Ọ̀gè phonology or morphology and her neighbouring languages which are Ọ̀wồn-Àjè, Ọ̀wồn-Ìdò and Ọ̀wồn-Àfá, for example, Temitope and Boluwaji (2012). Some unpublished undergraduate research projects have also been done on certain aspects of Ọ̀wồn-Ọ̀gè in the department of linguistics and Nigerian languages, University of Ilorin which includes Ogundele (2005) and Dosunmu (2005). To the best of my knowledge, no work has been done on focus constructions in Ọ̀wồn-Ọ̀gè.

This paper examines focus constructions in Ọ̀wồn-Ọ̀gè, it discusses the various constituents that can be focused in the language and propose a focus phrase structure for the focus constructions in Ọ̀wồn-Ọ̀gè.

The methods that were used to collect our data are the Ibadan 400 word list, frame techniques and the oral interview method. In collecting data through the use of Ibadan word list of 400 basic lexical items, the services of a Ọ̀wồn-Ọ̀gè native speaker was employed, who served as a language helper. The data were recorded and transcribed for the purposes of analysis.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework adopted in this research work is the theory of Principles and Parameters (Chomsky 1981, 1982, 1991; Chomsky and Lasnik 1991). The Principles and Parameters approach built upon early generative grammar by adding explanations to the theory that could reduce the difficulty in achieving both explanatory and descriptive adequacy. The greatest contribution to early generative grammar is that the P&P approach does away with the concept that a grammar is made up of several rules and 'grammatical constructions of the traditional sort' (Chomsky 1995:6). Instead, the P&P model says, that language is composed of universal principles' and a number of 'parameters' that apply to those principles.

This Theory is made up of seven modules which interrelate in the process of movement transformation. These sub-theories are: X-bar theory, Case theory, Theta theory, Binding theory, Government theory, Control theory and the Movement theory which is the sub-theory used for our analysis in this work.

### **2.1 Movement Theory**

The movement theory states that all transformational rules can be reduced to a single general rule called MOVE-ALPHA in the Principles and Parameters theory. Move- $\alpha$  maps the D-structure onto the S-structure thereby, changing the form of one linguistic structure to another. For instance, an active sentence can be changed to a passive one while a simple declarative sentence can be changed to a question through the use of transformations.

From the ongoing, I am going to account for focusing in Ọwọn-Ọgè as involving some kind of movement transformation which induces the introduction of a grammatical element that will herein be analysed as a focus marker. Focusing in Ọwọn-Ọgè is realized by inserting a focus marker in an affirmative sentence to change it into a focused structure. In other words, once there is focusing, transformation is bound to take place

## **3. Focus Constructions**

Chomsky (1971:199) and Jackendoff (1972:230-54) introduced the concept of focus in order to capture the relation between questions and natural responses.

According to Nwachuku (1988:7) and Quirk & Greenbaum (1973:408) it is believed that focus has to do with new information and that it indicates where the new information lies and the unit carrying this information. It is a fact that focus has to do with the speaker passing information that he feels is new to the hearer or to make a particular constituent important or emphatic.

Focus is coded in three basic ways Arokoyo (2013:6). This can be; Prosodically, Morphologically and Syntactically. The strategy employed in Ọwọn-Ọgè for focusing is the morphological method. That is, the assignment of a certain morphological element to the focus-marked constituent or to the constituent that contains the focus-marked element.

### 3.1 Constituents of focus in Ọwọ̀n-Ọ̀gè

All constituents can be focused in Ọwọ̀n-Ọ̀gè. i.e. NP, VP, PP, ADJP, and ADVP. But for the purpose of this paper, noun phrase focusing and verb phrase focusing will be examined.

#### 3.1.1 Noun Phrase Focusing

The Noun phrase to be focused in Ọwọ̀n-Ọ̀gè could be the subject NP, object of the verb phrase and object of preposition NP.

##### *Subject Noun Phrase Focus*

The focused constituent here is the subject NP. Being an SVO language (head first), the subject NP in Ọwọ̀n-Ọ̀gè appears at the beginning of the clause. For example:

- (1) a.i      Fẹ̀mì   dà bàtà  
               Femi buy shoe  
               ‘Femi bought a shoe.’
- a.ii    Fẹ̀mì úwọ̀n dà bàtà  
                     Femi Foc buy shoe  
                     ‘It is Femi that bought a shoe.’

##### *Direct Object-NP Focus*

The focus constituent here is the object of the verb.

- b.i        Fẹ̀mì   dà bàtà  
               Femi buy shoe  
               ‘Femi bought a shoe.’
- b.ii        [Bàtà]<sub>i</sub> úwọ̀n Fẹ̀mì dàà t<sub>i</sub>  
               Shoe    Foc Femi buy  
               ‘It was a shoe that Femi bought.’

##### *Complements of Preposition-NP Focus*

Complement of prepositions can also be focused in Ọwọ̀n-Ọ̀gè.

- (2) a.i        Adé   sẹ      ye úrùn ùjì  
               Ade PAST bath in river  
               ‘Ade had a bath in the river.’
- a.ii        Úrùn ùjì    úwọ̀n Ade ke    yèé  
                     in    water Foc Ade LOC bath  
                     ‘It was in the river that Ade had his bath.’

In addition, the preposition yin ‘for’ becomes ‘yán’ when a beneficiary is brought into focus and the preposition occur sentence finally. For example:

- b.i Bọla dà ìwé yin Jídé  
Bola buy book for jide  
'Bola bought a book for Jide.'
- b.ii Jide úwòn Bọla dà ìwé yán  
Jide Foc Bola buy book for  
'It was Jide that Bola bought the book for.'

### 3.2 Predicate/Verb Focus

Verbs are usually nominalised in Òwòn-Ògè before they can be focused. Like Yoruba, it is possible to focus a verb and leave a copy at the extraction site. Like Yoruba, a fixed segment must attach to the verb i.e the low toned 'à'. However, Òwòn-ògè does not require a copy of the initial consonant of the verb. For example when the verb dà (buy) is nominalised, it will appear as Àdá (buying) when it is in focus. Another interesting phenomenon about the nominalised verbs in the language is that the tone of the verb stem must be a high tone before they can take the prefix [à-]. Let's observe the verbs in table (1) below;

|     |              |      |            |
|-----|--------------|------|------------|
| Wọ  | 'to cry'     | Àwọ  | 'Crying'   |
| Sẹn | 'to sleep'   | Àsẹn | 'Sleeping' |
| Gùà | 'to greet'   | Àgùá | 'Greeting' |
| Nẹn | 'to be long' | Ànẹn | 'Length'   |
| Nù  | 'to be tall' | Ànú  | 'Tallness' |

Example (3) a.ii and b.ii below illustrates this;

- (3) a.i Táyo dà bàtà  
tayo buy shoe  
'Tayo bought a shoe.'
- a.ii Àdá úwòn Táyo dà bàtà  
Nom-buy Foc Tayo buy shoe  
'It is buying that Tayo bought the shoe.'
- b.i Ígé opú jù èkọ  
the dog eat pap  
'The dog ate the pap.'
- b.ii Àjú úwòn opú jù èkọ  
Nom-buy Foc dog eat pap  
'It is eating that the dog ate the pap.'

From the ongoing, we observed that focused constituents are moved to the sentence initial position followed by the focus marker in Òwòn-Ògè.

#### 4. Analysis of Ọ̀wọ̀n-Ọ̀gè Focus Constructions

This section deals with the analysis of the syntactic structure of focus constructions in Ọ̀wọ̀n-Ọ̀gè. In addition, it analyses the changes that takes place within a clause as a result of focusing. From the examples given in (1-3) above, it is clear that Ọ̀wọ̀n-Ọ̀gè makes use of ‘úwọ̀n’ to mark focus on all constituents. The trace borne by the moved constituent at the extraction site is a sign of co-indexation that shows the relationship between the moved constituent and its extraction site. We observed that when constituent is moved for focus, there is a gap at the extraction site, unlike in some other languages in the Kwa group of family where a resumptive pronoun occupies the extraction site. Apart from a gap, no anaphoric or resumptive pronoun is licensed in that position, only the NP trace is allowed in the extraction site.

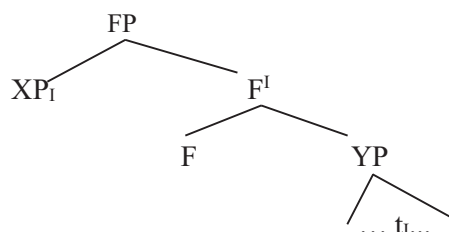
In addition, when the verb is focused, it is moved to the sentence initial position where the tone of the verb stem must be a high tone before they can take the prefix [à-] for it to be nominalised while retaining the verb in its original position.

Therefore, Ọ̀wọ̀n-Ọ̀gè uses the same morphology (*úwọ̀n*), for marking different types of focus. The focused constituent appears to the left periphery of the focus marker ‘úwọ̀n’ as a result of the movement transformation in the language. The structure in (4) below is the form for focus structure in Ọ̀wọ̀n-Ọ̀gè;

#### (4) Focused XP > Focus Marker > Clause

This can be represented diagrammatically as in (1) below:

Figure 1.



Based on Kiss (1998) focus phrase analysis, I propose that the focus phrase appears in the left periphery of the clause in Ọ̀wọ̀n-Ọ̀gè. This focus phrase is located in the CP periphery and its head is obligatorily filled with the copula ‘úwọ̀n’ which functions as a focus maker in this language. “Úwọ̀n” in this language requires the movement of focused constituent to its specifier (i.e., Spec FocP). Consider the structure in (5) for (2b):

#### (5) [ FocP Jídé<sub>i</sub> [ Foc úwọ̀n [IP Bola [VP dà [NP iwe [PP yán [ NP t<sub>i</sub> ]]]]]]]

In the structure above, ‘*Jide*’ the indirect object moved into the Spec FocP leaving behind in the extraction site a trace that is co-indexed with it and the head of the phrase is obligatorily filled with the focus marker. This movement is an instance of A-bar movement (i.e. the focused constituent is moved to a position outside the clause where it originates from). Thus, the d-structure of Ọ̀wọ̀n-Ọ̀gè clause can be represented on a phrase marker as in (2) below and the focused object position is illustrated with the phrase marker in (3):



Figure 2

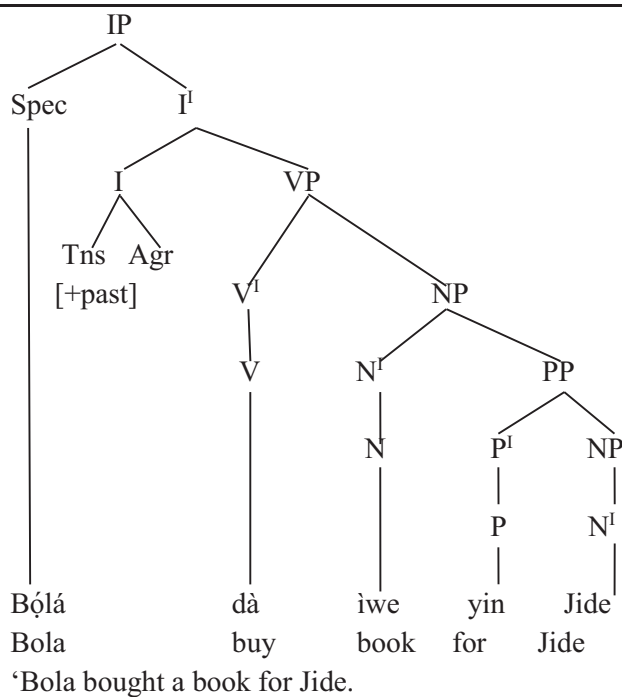
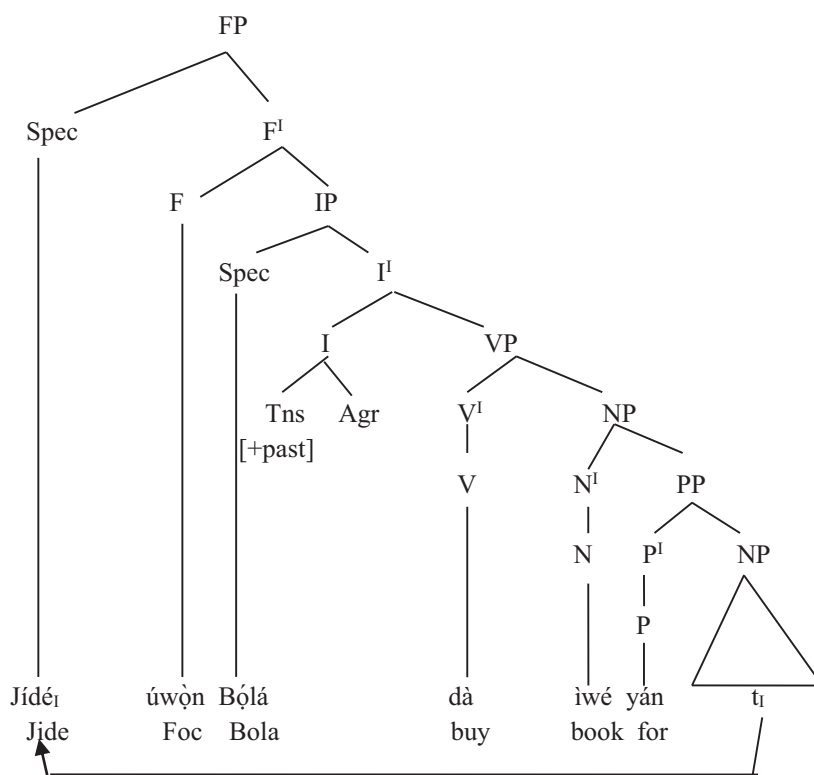


Figure 3



#### 4. Conclusion

This paper addressed focus constructions in Ọ̀wọ̀n-Ọ̀gè. The paper established the fact that Ọ̀wọ̀n-Ọ̀gè makes use of a focus marker (úwòn) to focus on different constituents. It was also noted that there is a gap at the extraction site of the focused constituent but unlike some other languages (Yoruba-Benue-Congo and Vata- Kru) that licenses a resumptive pronoun in the vacated site, Ọ̀wọ̀n-Ọ̀gè does not allow the appearance of such pronoun.

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## **44. Contrastive Analysis of Tense and Aspect in English and Abinu**

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Tense and aspect marking in English pose a major pedagogic challenge to Abinu speakers of English. This is due to the complexity of tense and aspect marking in English and mother tongue interference. There is, therefore, the need to subject the two linguistic systems to contrastive analysis in order to facilitate the teaching of English in Bunu area of Kogi State, Nigeria. This paper, therefore, undertakes a contrastive study of these two linguistic systems to enhance practical teaching and learning. The data for this study were drawn purposively from native speakers of Abinu through the process of elicitation, and existing literature on the English language. The study is hinged on the weak version of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, which seeks to establish areas of similarity and differences between two languages which may inhibit learning. The analysis reveals that while tense and aspect are marked in English through verbal inflection, they are marked in Abinu through the introduction of pre-verbal elements.

**Keywords:** *Abinu, tense and aspect, interference, CA hypothesis, mother tongue*

### **1. Introduction**

It is not debatable that there are areas of convergence and divergence among languages of the world. It is on this basis that linguists like Chomsky seek to establish a theory of grammar that is universalist in outlook and approach. This effort has served as impetus for contrastive analysts, translators and most importantly, language teachers. The pedagogical relevance of contrastive analysis is now being tapped to aid language teaching in second language (L2) situations like Nigeria.

The significant role that English now plays in Nigeria makes its learning important for all who want to be part of national as well international affairs. The language has become particularly important following its entrenchment in the Nigerian constitution. It is the official language meant for national and international engagements for Nigeria. It also functions as the lingua franca that links the various ethnic groups in Nigeria (Lamidi, 2011). Its social and official applications are emphasized by Bamgbose (1971:39), cited in Lamidi (2011:115), when he says that:

Those who do not know English are at a disadvantage, for at one time or the other they are inevitably involved with matters which require some knowledge of English: for example, with things like licences, electricity bill,... various government forms and official letters.

Tense and aspect marking in English pose a major challenge to Abinu speakers of English. This is due to the complexity of tense and aspect marking in English and mother tongue interference. In this study, therefore, an attempt is made to examine areas

of correspondences and discrepancies between how tense and aspect systems are marked in English (L2) and Abinu (L1) in order to shed light on possible areas of difficulty for Abinu learners of English. Since the case of English and Abinu reveal a situation of languages in contact, Ogunsiji and Olanrewaju's (2010: 20) arguments that 'when two languages are in contact, there is the tendency to view the second language in the system of the first language' becomes plausible in the context of this study. It was observed that after education in English at the various levels of education—primary, secondary and tertiary levels, Abinu speakers of English still have problems with the correct marking of tense and aspect. This might be due to mother tongue interference and other linguistic inadequacies.

Arokoyo (2007) has explored the phonology of Okun dialects, which of course includes Abinu. But, since her study is phonological, it did not address the specific need to help Abinu speakers of English on the correct application of tense and aspect, which this study seeks to address. Atoyebi (2010) has shown that tense and aspect are distinct systems that are marked in Oko language. Also, Lamidi (2011) has studied the marking of tense and aspect by Yoruba learners of English. He observes that mother tongue influence as well as the complex nature of tense and aspect constitute problem areas to Yoruba speakers of English. Although his study has shed light on problem areas for Yoruba speakers of English, there is yet the need to examine possible areas of difficulty for Abinu speakers of English. Although Abinu is a dialect of Yoruba, there are overt linguistic differences in patterns that call for specific study aimed at helping Abinu speakers of English which his study has not catered for. As observed by Arokoyo (2007:505), Okun dialects, to which Abinu belongs, have peculiar linguistic features. This calls for a language/dialect specific attention. Hence, this study focuses on Abinu speakers of English with a view to pointing out areas of similarities and differences for language teaching and learning.

The data for this study were purposively collected at random from the native speakers of Abinu through elicitation technique and samples of English utterances were got from existing literature on English linguistics that were written to reflect the dialectal nuances of the Nigerian dialect of English.

## **2. A brief historical origin of Abinu speakers**

Scholarly explorations into the origin of Bunu people of Kabba/Bunu Local Government Area of Kogi West Senatorial District of Kogi State, Nigeria have shown that there is a dearth of literature on the origin of the people. This is corroborated by Melefa (2005:5) who argues that there is indeed, a dearth of literature on the origin of Bunu'. According to him (Melefa, 2005:6), the most authentic origin of Bunu is as documented by Byng Hall and James (1965:71-72) in *Temple and Temple* thus:

The Bunu migrated from Iddo (which is said to be in Southern Nigeria, or more likely in the extreme South of Kabba province) in search of game, and the first settlers founded Kirri and Ike in the present Bunu District. They became the over-lords and were joined by many migrants from Yagba, extending their

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suzerainty over the Aworo and all peoples from Kirri in the North to Aiere and Ogidi in the South-West; also over all tribes with vertical face-markings.

The authenticity of the account above lies in the fact that there are communities in the present day Ekiti State that bear Iddo like Iddo Faboro, Iddo Ekiti and Iddo Ajinare which bear the semblance of what is contained in Byng Hall and James' account. Also, the linguistic similarity between Yoruba and Abinu supports the claims in the account above. Although Abinu is unarguably a dialect of Yoruba, at least going by certain linguistic similarities they share, there are obvious linguistic differences in the two linguistic systems such that insights provided by studies on Yoruba to aid pedagogy will not be sufficient to address specific problem areas for the Abinu learner of English. This calls for a dialect specific study that will examine what is actually obtainable in Abinu.

### 3. Abinu

According to Melefa (2005), speakers of Abinu are about 70-80,000. Abinu is listed on the linguistic map of Nigeria as a dialect of Yoruba. This is not unconnected with certain level of shared mutual intelligibility and areas of similarities in their linguistic systems. It is to be noted that Abinu/Bunu is not a homogenous community as there are slight variations among the speakers of the dialect, though with mutual intelligibility. The dialect as spoken in communities like Olle-Bunu, Odo Ape-Bunu, Oke-Bukun, etc. varies from the way it is spoken in communities like Ike-Bunu, Akutupa, Aiyetoro, Iluke, amongst others.

Abinu belongs to a group of dialects called Okun dialects, which comprise Owe, Iyagba, Ijumu, Bunu and Oworo spoken in the southern part of Kogi State. Like the other dialects, it is a member of Niger-Congo language family. It has an orthography that comprises 27 graphemes which include:

A B D E Ě F G GB I GH H J K L M N O Q P KP R S SH T U W Y.

There is the obvious need to further subject this dialect to more elaborate linguistic analysis at all levels.

The need to contrast Abinu with English, though it is agreeably considered a dialect of Yoruba, which has been contrasted with English by scholars like Lamidi (2011), is the observation that in recent times, the language/dialect distinction has been largely seen as something very difficult to delineate. The distinction is largely considered as more psychological than linguistic. Bailey (1981:52, quoted in Harris 1990:32) once observed how remarkable it is that in linguistics the term dialect "can go on being used in a certain sense after investigation has shown that the term reflects to nothing that can be found in the real world." It could be argued that the same can be said for the notion of language. Social dialectology has shown that both terms are relative and dependent on extra-linguistic considerations; neither stands up to close objective scrutiny from a structural viewpoint alone (Haugen 1966, Milroy and Milroy 1997). Wolfram (1998:119) gives an exaggerated analogy when he says that 'The



popular understanding of dialect is probably akin to a modern geophysicist maintaining that the earth is flat.' As Trudgill (1974:16) puts it, they are 'merely a convenient fiction.' Although this may be considered as representing an extreme theoretical perspective, it is true that the notions of language and dialect are difficult to define and clearly demarcate; and distinguishing criteria are not always applied consistently across language systems. The concepts of language and dialect are viewed by Hudson (1996) as both a psychological and a social reality to the general public. Harris (1990) calls the much taunted distinction between language and dialect as 'the dialect myth'.

The arguments above are cited not just to give credence to the fact that theoretical positions on the language/dialect dichotomy have changed but to also show that both systems exhibit independent features that call for specific investigations that the social lumping of both cannot offer. The case of tense and aspect marking in Yoruba and Abinu reveals the need for an independent study of the two systems. Lamidi's (2011) study reveals how tense and aspect are marked in Yoruba distinctly from the ways they are marked in English, with a view to shedding light on problem areas for Yoruba learners of English. His findings are not particularly useful in helping Abinu learners of English to cope with pedagogic problems of learning English not because they do not represent tense and aspect marking in Yoruba well, but because of the differences in the ways tense and aspect are marked in the two linguistic systems. This situation calls for a specific study that will help Abinu learners of English to tackle pedagogic issues that arise as a result of the differences in how tense and aspect are marked in English and Abinu.

#### **4. Contrastive analysis**

The arguments in favour of the relevance of contrastive analysis (CA), especially in foreign language teaching, still holds despite criticisms levelled against it. The relevance of CA is still emphasized by linguists, especially in the wake of globalization. As noted by Nickel (1971:2), CA compares languages with the quite utilitarian aim of improving the methods and results of language teaching. It is instructive to note that though CA is relevant in establishing linguistic typology and also could make useful inputs to machine translation, Nickel's (1971:2) claim that CA's most significant contribution is in the area of foreign language teaching is plausible and germane. Since CA is a form of inter-linguistic investigation, its most relevant area for language teaching is obviously the differences and similarities between languages which it seeks to reveal so that attention may be focused on such areas. Lado (1957:2) opines that CA is relevant in foreign language teaching in that those students who come in contact with 'a foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult'.

Lamidi (2011:116) rightly observed that 'one major feature of CA that accounts for its continued relevance is its use for pedagogical purposes'. It systematically compares two languages in order to establish areas of similarities and dissimilarities in the languages. Following Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, the arguments are that areas of similarities will facilitate learning while areas of dissimilarities will constrain learning in a second language situation (Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991; James, 1980;

Lamidi, 2011). This implies that certain features of the mother tongue (MT) could be transferred into the second language (L2), which of course will inhibit learning. Transfer could be positive or negative. If positive, it is believed to facilitate learning while negative transfer, that is interference, is said to inhibit learning (James, 1980).

The analysis of the data for this study is hinged on Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis. The basic premise of Lado's (1957) Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) is that language learning can be more successful when the two languages – the native and the foreign – are similar. This is referred to by some linguists as “positive transfer”. In an overview of Lado's CAH, Schuster (1997) indicates that English learners of German or German learners of English are destined to have a positive transfer because the two languages do have many similarities. On the other hand, the theory stipulates that learning will be quite difficult, or even unsuccessful, when the two languages are different. An example of this is English vis-à-vis Asian languages. As such, Lado and his supporters believe that second language teaching should concentrate on the differences, with little or no emphasis on similarities. Though this argument may sound logical in theory, it is full of loopholes in practice. Teaching differences alone means that important parts of a foreign language are not taught at all. This may have grave consequences on the language learning process. It will certainly weaken it instead of strengthening it.

In the 1970s, Lado's CAH underwent some scrutiny of its predictability. In an influential article, Wardhaugh (1970:124) states that the hypothesis could be classified into two versions: strong and weak. The strong version holds that the majority of L2 errors were due to negative transfer. The weak version, on the other hand, explains errors after they were made. Wardhaugh (1970:124) also points out that ‘CAH was also criticized on the ground that it could not take into account relative difficulty among L2 segments that shared the property of being different from the L1.’ Oller and Ziahosseiny (1970:184) also propose a moderate version of the CAH to explain the hierarchy of difficulty. The pair maintained that similar phenomena, or as they put it “wherever patterns are minimally distinct,” are harder to acquire than dissimilar phenomena. To test their views, they conducted a study which was based on English spelling errors on in a placement test. Spelling errors of foreign students whose native language employed a Roman alphabet were compared with spelling errors of foreign students whose native language had little or no relation to such an alphabet. The results of this study led Oller and Ziahosseiny to conclude that as far as English spelling is concerned, knowledge of one Roman writing system makes it more difficult, not less, to acquire another Roman spelling system.

The criticism of Lado's initial thoughts on CAH has helped to isolate the relevant portions of his theoretical positions, in some way, fine-tuning his arguments such that the weak version of his postulation is seen as a valuable theoretical instrument for contrastive analysis. Since the weak version provides a theoretical basis for explaining errors that are made by second language learners, it can be used therefore to systematically explain the areas that may pose learning problems to second language learners. This is the manner in which the weak version of his theory has been utilised in this present study.

## 5. Tense marking in English

According to Osisanwo (1999), tense and aspect are two distinct systems within the verbal group that are marked distinctly in English. Therefore, the question that confronts one is: how are tense and aspect marked in English? As observed by Quirk and Greenbaum (1973:40), 'time is a universal, non-linguistic concept with three divisions: past, present, and future. By tense, we understand the correspondence between the form of the verb and our concept of time. Conversely, they argue that aspect concerns the manner in which the verbal action is experienced or regarded (for example as completed or in progress). For Eka (1994: 125), the concept of tense is closely tied to the concept of time in English. He asserts that tense is a 'systematic grammatical device for expressing time relations'. He claims further that the traditional classification of tenses in English into present, past and future, following the patterns in Greek and Latin does not hold, rather, English only has grammatical devices for expressing the present tense and the past tense and not the future tense. Corroborating this view, Quirk and Greenbaum (1973:47) assert that:

There is no obvious future tense in English corresponding to the time/tense relation for present and past. Instead there are several possibilities for denoting future time. Futurity, modality, and aspect are closely related, and future time is rendered by means of modal auxiliaries or semi-auxiliaries, or by simple present forms or progressive forms.

Omorodion (2003) sees tense as one of the markers of English verbs. He defines it as the correspondence between finite verbs forms and the concept of time; that is, the change that takes place in the form of the verb to indicate time. Thus, tense is a grammatical marker of time. There are two types of tense in English. Consequently, the two correspondences between finite verb forms and time make it possible to have present and past tenses. In English, verbs are often inflected for tense, number, person, and case (Lamidi, 2011: 116). Hence, the present and the past tenses could be illustrated thus:

1. Verb base form and –s form correspond with present time. For example,

- (a) I play.
- (b) He plays (-s) (present tense)

2. -ed form corresponds with past time. For example:

- (a) I played yesterday (-ed)
- (b) He played yesterday (-ed)

*The present tense:* This indicates actions, events or activities taking place now or at the moment. Examples:

3. (a) She *teaches* French (-es)
- (b) The man *leaves* now (-es)

The present tense in English can be used to indicate the following:

---

(i) *Universal statements or truth.*

Examples:

- (a) The sun *sets* in the west (-s)
- (b) The sun *rises* every day (-es)
- (c) Spiders *have* eight legs (ø)

(ii) *Habitual activities.*

Examples:

- (a) She *dresses* well to school every day (-es)
- (b) He *smokes* every day (-es)
- (c) John *walks* to school always (-s)

(iii) *Simple present to mark futurity.*

Examples:

- (a) The class *ends* at 2pm (-s)
- (b) Our classes *start* at 8am (ø)
- (c) The plane *leaves* for Chicago at 2pm (-es)

(iv) *Historic present:* This is a situation in which past events are treated as if they were in the present as in literature and newspaper headlines.

Examples:

- (a) Man *beats* wife to death (-s)
- (b) John *tells* me that you have been pardoned (-s)
- (c) Supreme Court *swears* in new judges (-s)

*The past tense:* The past tense in English is used to refer to time before now; that is, events or actions that took place at a particular point in time or in a given period before the present moment or an event that took place before the time of speaking. The past can be illustrated with the examples below:

- (a) The plane *landed* at the airport yesterday (-ed)
- (b) I *taught* them English last week (vowel sound replacement)
- (c) He *wrote* his examination with a big pen (vowel sound replacement)

The simple past tense can be used to express the following:

1. *Hypothetical past:* It is used with subordinate clause 'if'.

- (a) *If I were you*, I would accept the offer (vowel sound replacement)
- (b) She spoke *as if she were* the president (vowel sound replacement)
- (c) *If he were here*, it would be more fun (vowel sound replacement)

ii. *Attitude in the past:* This is used to express politeness. It relates to the attitude of the speaker rather than time. Past forms of the verb are used to address superiors or order people in requests and every day conversation. Examples:

- (a) Sir, *could* I come in? (vowel sound replacement)

- 
- (b) Please, I wanted to see you (-ed)
  - (c) *Could* you shut the door? (vowel sound replacement)

As the examples above show, the verbs have well defined forms for marking present and past tenses in English.

*The future:* Even though it has been argued, convincingly too, by scholars like Quirk and Greebaum (1973), Eka (1994), and Omorodion (2003) that there is no obvious future tense in English corresponding to the time/tense relation for present and past, but it is good to examine the implication of Comrie's (1976) arguments for future tense in English. To forge a common ground between the positions advanced by the two sides in the argument is to consider how the future time is said to be marked through the use of modal auxiliaries. Modal auxiliaries like 'will', 'shall', 'would', etc. are used in English to mark the future time. Examples:

- (a) He will come here tomorrow (ø)
- (b) I shall leave Lagos tonight (ø)
- (c) He may leave tomorrow (ø)

It is worthy of note that modal auxiliaries are used in English to show future time reference.

## 6. Tense marking in Abinu

In Abinu, three tenses are marked or reflected distinctly with reference to time— *asiko ijọ ana*, *asiko ijọ eni* and *asiko ijọ iwaju*. These three are usually captured with reference to time in Abinu. However, this is not marked through the process of verbal morphology, unlike in English. The lexical verb is not usually inflected to mark tense in Abinu. The speakers of the language have a well-developed concept of time and this is usually reflected in their reference to the present, the past and the future which are usually reflected in the structure of their constructions through the introduction of independent morphemes or particles to indicate the various event times.

The present tense is not marked on the lexical verb; rather, a pre-verbal morpheme 'i' is introduced to mark the present tense. Unlike in English where the -ed form is used to mark the past tense, lexical verbs in their uninflected forms are used without any structural change to mark the past tense. Like the present tense, a pre-verbal element is introduced to mark the future tense in order to show that the people reflect the concept of the future time.

### *The present tense*

The present tense in Abinu is marked through the introduction of a pre-verbal particle- 'i'. It is used to refer to an action or an event that takes place at the moment of speaking or an event that takes place regularly in the present. Unlike in English where the verbs have distinct forms for marking the present tense, this is not the case with the Abinu. The examples below show this:

- 
1. (a) Ade                      i-jẹ                      isu (particle i-)  
          Ade                      PRE-eat                      yam  
          Ade eats yam.
- (b) Ojo                      i-gba                      eti                      ẹ (particle i-)  
          Ojo                      PRE-slap                      ear                      him/her.  
          Ojo slaps him/her.
- (c) Dele                      i-pa                      ẹja (particle i-)  
          Dele                      PRE-kill                      fish  
          Dele catches fish.
- (d) Omo                      naa                      i-mu                      ọti (particle i-)  
          Child                      the                      PRE-drink                      alcohol  
          The child drinks alcohol.
- (e) Baba    mi                      i-re                      oko                      lejejumọ (particle i-)  
          Father my                      PRE-go                      farm                      everyday  
          My father goes to the farm every day.
- (f) Ọmọ                      naa                      i-hun                      nika (particle i-)  
          Child                      the                      PRE-sleep                      well  
          The child sleeps well.
- (g) Dada    ati baba ẹ                      i-gha                      daadaa (particle. i-)  
          Dada CONJ. Father his PRE-come house                      always  
          Dada and his father come home always.
- (h) Dare    i-jijo                      lejejumọ (particle i-)  
          Dare    PRE-dance                      everyday  
          Dare    dancesevery day.

The morpheme ‘-i’ is the pre-verbal particle that is used to mark the present tense in Abinu. Just like the Yoruba ‘n’, it is also used to indicate habitual sentences. In English, one of the ways habitual sentences are marked is through the addition of the morpheme ‘-s’ to a base as shown earlier. This is not so for Abinu. As shown in the examples above, the present tense as well as habitual sentences are marked in Abinu through the introduction of the morpheme ‘-i’ which is independent of the verbal elements in sentences.

#### *The past tense*

Unlike in English where the morpheme -ed or -ied is used to mark the past tense, lexical verbs are left uninflected in Abinu to show an event or action that took place in the past.



Only the simple past tense is marked on the uninflected forms of the lexical verbs as shown below:

2. (a) Dare    jijo    lana (ø)  
       Dare    PST-dance    yesterday  
       Dare    danced        yesterday.
- (b) Dada        ati        baba    ẹ    gha                    ile lana (ø)  
       Dada        CONJ.father his PST-come        house yesterday  
       Dada and his father came home yesterday.
- (c) Ọmọ        naa        hun                    nika (ø)  
       Child    the        PST-sleep        well  
       The child slept well.
- (d) Ade        jẹ                    isu    lana (ø)  
       Ade        PST-eat        yam    yesterday  
       Ade ate yam yesterday.
- (e) Ojo        gba                    eti    ẹ (ø)  
       Ojo        PST-slap        ear    him/her  
       Ojo slapped him/her.
- (f) Ọmọ        naa        mu                    ọti                    lana (ø)  
       Child    the        PST-drink        alcohol        yesterday  
       The child drank alcohol yesterday.
- (g) Baba        mi        re                    oko    lana (ø)  
       Father    my        PST-go        farm    yesterday  
       My father went to the farm yesterday.
- (h) Dele        pa                    ẹja    lana (ø)  
       Dele        PST-kill        fish    yesterday  
       Dele caught fish yesterday.

As the examples above show, the verbs do not change their forms to mark the past tense. This is however not the case with English which marks past tense by adding the past tense morpheme ‘-ed’.

### *The future tense*

In Abinu, the concept of the time after now is not marked on the verb; rather, it is marked through the introduction of a pre-verbal element-‘ni’ in order to show reference to the time in the future. This is demonstrated below:

- (a) Ade        ni-jẹ        isu        lọla (particle ni-)  
       Ade                FUT-eat        yam    tomorrow  
       Ade will eat yam tomorrow.
- (b) Ojo        ni-gba eti        ẹ        lọṣẹ        anḃo (particle ni-)  
       Ojo                FUT-slap        ear    him/her        week    next  
       Ojo will slap him/her next week.
- (c) Dele        ni-pa        ẹja        lọla (part. ni-)  
       Dele        FUT-kill        fish    tomorrow  
       Dele will catch fish tomorrow.
- (d) Ọmọ        naa        ni-mu        ọti        lọla (particle ni-)  
       Child        the        FUT-drink        alcohol                tomorrow  
       The child will drink alcohol tomorrow.
- (e) Josi        ni-lu        elu        nika        lọla (particle ni-)  
       Joseph        FUT-beat        drum    well    tomorrow  
       Joseph will beat the drum well tomorrow.
- (f) Dada        ati        baba        ẹ        ni-gha        lola (particle ni-)  
       Dada        CONJ.father    his        FUT-come        tomorrow  
       Dada and his father will come tomorrow.
- (g) Ọmọ        naa        ni-hun        nika (particle ni-)  
       Child        the        FUT-sleep        well  
       The child will sleep well.
- (h) Dare        ni-jijo        daadaa        lọla (particle ni-)  
       Dare        FUT-dance        well    tomorrow  
       Dare will dance well tomorrow.

In English, modal auxiliary verbs like ‘will’, ‘shall’ etc. are used to mark futurity since the future tense is not marked on the lexical verb. As shown above, the particle ‘ni’ is used to indicate something that will take place in the future in Abinu. This particle comes before the verb but is not part of the verb or the verbal group. Of course modal auxiliary verbs are part of the verbal group in English, but the particle ‘ni’ used to mark futurity in Abinu is not part of the verbal group. This structural difference might constitute a problem for Abinu learners of English.

## 7. Constrastive statements and hierarchy of problems

Tense marking in English is done through the process of verbal morphology i.e. the lexical verb that bears the action of a sentence is usually inflected post-verbally in English to mark the present and the past tense, and reference is made to the future time through the use of modal auxiliary verbs; however, the marking of tense in Abinu is not done through the process of verbal morphology. What is termed verbal morphology here is the process of word formation that is effected within the structure of the verbal group, that is, inflections that take place within the structure of the verbal group or effected on the verb. In Abinu, the present tense is marked through the introduction of a pre-verbal element ‘-i’, while the past tense is marked with the lexical verb left in its uninflected form that is, ( $\emptyset$ ) to mark tense. For the Abinu speakers, tense is not inherently marked within the structure of the verbal element; rather to mark tense, pre-verbal particles ‘-i’, ( $\emptyset$ ) and ‘-ni’ are introduced to mark the present, past and future tenses respectively. This disparity poses a major problem to an Abinu learner of English. In fact, they may violate certain grammatical rules such as those of tense sequence, appropriate choice of the present or past tense in some contexts of use. The present tense form in English, as illustrated earlier, is used for different situations such as universal truths, habitual actions etc., but this is not used in Abinu. Also, the verbs in English have distinct forms for marking present and past tenses, but this is not the case for Abinu.

Since tense is marked overtly in English on the verbal elements in sentences and are not marked in the same manner in Abinu, a speaker of Abinu who is learning English will find the marking of tenses in English the most difficult area to confront, especially with the pre-verbal and post-verbal differences. For example, it is not uncommon to find Abinu learners who find it difficult to mark tense on irregular verbs such as *cut*, *burst*, *hit* etc. They may result to generalisation by using the –ed form in the context of the past tense, thus:

- (a) \*The man’s tyre bursted
- (b) \*He hitted his knee

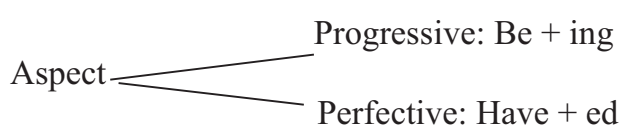
Also, a learner may be confused by such verbs that have two different realisations of the past. Such verbs like *spell* (spelt/spelled), *spill* (spilt/spilled) etc. may pose serious challenge to learners. Obviously, the conceptualization of time differs in the two languages and the grammars of the two languages have different ways of reflecting time in their verbal systems. A speaker of Abinu is likely to assume that tense in English will also be marked by introducing a different element before the verb to show the time of the action of the verb. Also, the verbal system of the English language differs from that of Abinu in that English permits verbal inflection, whereas Abinu does not permit verbal inflection. An Abinu learner of English may attempt to mark tense on the verb in English pre-verbally.

In Abinu, reference to the time past is not marked on the verb. The verb showing that an action happened in the past in Abinu is usually left in its original uninflected

form. So, an Abinu learner of English may misconstrue verbs that are not inflected in English as verbs in their past tense forms.

### 8. Aspect marking in English

Aspect is the different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation (Comrie, 1976:3; Lamidi, 2011:122). It is a grammatical category referring to how the time or verbal action is viewed, regarded or experienced by the speaker or writer: either as completed action or an action that is in progress. Aspect in English is indicated by a combination of auxiliary and lexical verbs forms. These are two main types of the aspectual system in English: the Progressive and the Perfective.



#### *The progressive aspect*

The duration for this aspect is a continuous one. The form of the progressive aspect is subj + be +base + ing. The verb 'be' will always inflect to suit the subject since it has eight forms.

Examples:

- (a) I am jumping for joy.
- (b) Joan is singing
- (c) They are playing football

The progressive aspect has two forms in English:

- (i) *Present Progressive Aspect*: This is used to show an action that started some time ago and still continues.

Examples:

- (a) Joan is waving (-ing)
- (b) Bayonle is eating rice (-ing)
- (c) Linda is sleeping in her room (-ing)

- (ii) *Past Progressive Aspect*: This is used to express a past habit or an action or process.

Examples:

- (a) We were having a party (be+ing)
- (b) I was teaching in the morning (be+ing)
- (c) I was reading in the morning when it happened (be+ing)

Clearly, the progressive aspect in English, as shown with the examples above, is marked with the form subj + be +base + ing to show an action that is in progress. It is marked within the structure of the verbal group.

#### **The perfective aspect**

This refers to the action that has been completed. The form of the perfective aspect is: Subject + Auxiliary (have) +base + -ed. The perfective is an act or process deemed to have been completed. Examples:

- (a) He has lived in Ibadan for five years (aux.+ -ed)
- (b) I have studied hard for this examination (aux. + -ied)
- (c) The school had produced brilliant scholars before it was closed down.  
(aux.+ -ed)

The perfective aspect is also sub-divided into two:

(i) *Present Perfect Aspect*: It is used to describe an action that has been completed but has present relevance in it. Examples:

- (a) John has lived in London for ten years (aux.+ -ed)
- (b) I have danced (aux.+ -ed)
- (c) He has eaten the food (aux.+ -en)

(ii) *Past Perfect Aspect*: The verb in this category shows the completion of an action in the remote past. Examples:

- (a) Justina had lived in Lagos for five years (aux.+ -ed)
- (b) She had washed the plates (aux.+ -ed)
- (c) She had eaten the food (aux.+ -en)
- (d)

As demonstrated above, the aspectual systems of English are morphologically marked on the verbal system.

## 9. Aspect marking in Abinu

As noted by Atoyebi (2010:204), aspect relates to the internal temporal structure of a situation. The internal temporal structure of events is captured in Abinu to reflect the state of the action expressed by the verbs as either completed or still in progress. Though this is not usually reflected on the lexical verb, an action can either be expressed in its aspectual form as either completed or still in progress. This gives rise to two aspectual forms in Abinu thus: the progressive and the perfective aspects. For the progressive aspect, a pre-verbal element– **an un-** is introduced, while the perfective aspect is marked with **ti-**.

### *The progressive aspect*

The progressive aspect in Abinu indicates an action that is still in progress. It is not marked on the verb bearing the action of the sentence, rather a pre- verbal element– ‘**an un-**’ is introduced to show that the action indicated by the verb is progressive. There are no obvious inflections of the verbal elements. They are left in their forms and an independent element is introduced to show that the action is continuous. Examples:

- (a) Baba    mi    an un - re    oko (part. an un-)  
    Father   my   PROG -go    farm

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My father is going to the farm.

(b) Iye        mi    an un-he        yẹhẹfẹrẹ (part. an un-)  
 Mother   my   PROG-cook   rice  
 My mother is cooking rice.

(c) I        an un - bọ    nle (part. an un-)  
 He/she PROG-come   home  
 He/she is coming home.

(d) Me        an un-jeun   be in (part.an un-)  
 1PER.SING   PROG-eat now  
 I am eating now.

(e) Oluike   an un-ghejọ   hi   ọ (part.an un-)  
 Oluike   PROG-talk   to you  
 Oluike is talking to you.

(f) Anti    mi    an un- wẹ        be in (part.an un-)  
 Sister   my   PROG-bathe now  
 My sister is bathing now

(g) Olootu   an un- kọ   ile        tika (part.an un-)  
 Olootu   PROG-build   house   that  
 Olootu is building that house.

(h) Yawo   ẹ    an un- jade (part. an un-)  
 Wife   his   PROG-go out.  
 His wife is going out.

The progressive aspect in Abinu is not marked overtly within the structure of the verbal group. Its marking is done through the introduction of pre-verbal particle ‘-an un’ which is not part of the verbal group. This situation contrasts with the case of English where the progressive aspect is marked within the structure of the verbal group. This constitutes an area of emphasis for an Abinu learner of English.

### *The perfective aspect*

This indicates an action that has been completed. The action expressed as completed is indicated with the pre-verbal element ‘**ti**’ which when translated into English will become the central auxiliary verb ‘has’. Examples:

(a) Baba    mi    ti-re        oko (part.ti-)  
 Father   my   PERF-go farm.  
 My father has gone to the farm.

(b) Iye        mi    ti-he        isu (part.ti-)



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Mother my PERF-cook yam  
My mother has cooked yam.

- (c) E ti-bọ hi ile.  
He/she PERF-return to house.  
He/she has returned home.

- (d) Me ti-jẹun (part.ti-)  
1PER.SING PERF. Eat  
I have eaten.

- (e) Yawo ẹ ti-jade (part.ti-)  
Wife his PERF-go  
His wife has gone out.

- (f) Oluike ti-ghejo hi wo (part.ti-)  
Oluike PERF- speak to you.  
Oluike has spoken to you.

As demonstrated with the examples above, the perfective aspect in Abinu is marked outside the structure of the verbal group with the particle 'ti'. This is not so with English where the perfective aspect is marked within the structure of the verbal group with the form Subject + Auxiliary (have) +base + -ed.

### **10. Contrastive statements and hierarchy of problems**

No doubts, the two linguistic systems examined mark aspect, but their aspectual markings vary. While English marks its aspectual system within the structure of the verbal elements, by inflecting and varying the forms of the verb 'be' according to the subject of the sentence in the progressive aspect and the central auxiliary verb 'have' in the perfective aspect, Abinu, on the other hand, marks both the progressive and perfective aspect through the introduction of pre-verbal elements to indicate whether the action of the verb is progressive ('an un-') or perfective ('ti-'). Also, the two languages differ in the marking of aspect in that English has a system for specifying whether the aspectual is progressive in the present or past, whereas the aspectual system in Abinu can only specify whether the action of the verb is progressive or perfective. Abinu has no aspectual system for specifying a progressive action in the present or past and also a perfective action in the present or past. This is so because the temporal system in Abinu does make provision for events to be viewed beyond that it either perfected or in progress. The world view of the speakers is constituted in a way that there is no room for varying the perfective aspect beyond just that the action being considered has been perfected.

For an L1 speaker of Abinu who is learning English, the most problematic area of the marking of aspect in English is the fact that English marks the aspectual system as either perfective in the present or past and or progressive in the present or past,

whereas in Abinu the aspectual system could only be either progressive or perfective. As a result of this disparity, he/she may assume that since his/her language marks the aspectual system as either progressive or perfective only, the situation will also be the same in English and when faced with situations of progressive in the present or past, he/ she may find this situation very problematic

Also, since the aspectual system permits the inflection of verbal elements and the same is not allowed in Abinu, the Abinu learner of English may also find this problematic. Instead of inflecting verbal elements to indicate various aspects, he/she may attempt to introduce a pre-verbal element to mark the aspectual in English.

Having examined the markings of tense and aspect in English and Abinu, it is important to draw attention to the fact that in the two linguistic systems contrasted, there are varied ways of conceptualizing time and this is reflected in the differing mechanisms for marking tense and aspect within the structure of the verbal elements of the two languages. For the English language, tense and aspect are marked by inflecting verbal elements to relate either the correspondence between time and the form of the verb and also to indicate the state of the action conveyed by the verbal element as either completed or progressive. On the contrary, the Abinu language relates the correspondence between time and the form of the verb by introducing pre-verbal elements like 'i' and 'ni' to indicate the present and future tenses respectively, while leaving the verb in its uninflected form to indicate the past tense. The state of the action as either completed or in progress is also indicated through the introduction of pre-verbal elements 'an un' and 'ti' for the progressive and the perfective aspects respectively. In English, verbal inflection caters for both the past and the present tense and the various aspectual systems, while the past tense in Abinu is not marked on the verb, rather the verb is left in its uninflected shape to indicate the past; the present and future tenses and the aspectual systems are respectively marked through the introduction of pre-verbal elements. This study is concluded on the premise that the disparity in time conceptualisation in the languages could be responsible for the varying ways of marking tense and aspect in them.

## 11. Suggestions for practical teaching and conclusion

From our contrastive statements and hierarchy of problems presented for both tense and aspect markings in English and Abinu, it is important to stress that paying close attention to those areas of disparities between the two languages will enhance the learning of English for an L1 speaker of Abinu. Since the inflection of verbal elements in English to mark tense contrasts with the introduction of pre-verbal elements in Abinu, the teacher of English in this context needs to bear in mind that this area of disparity deserves more attention than other areas where the learner could easily draw models from the systems in his language. This suggests that the teacher should devote more attention to teaching the rudiments of inflection in English as it relates to marking tense. The teacher needs to help the learner to realise that since time conceptualization varies in the two languages, tense markings may also vary, which suggest that the learner should learn how the correspondence between time and the forms of the verb is marked in English independent of his knowledge of his language. The Abinu learner of English

should also bear in mind that English inflects verbs to mark the past tense, whereas Abinu does not, so he/she needs to learn the system in English independent of his knowledge of the system in his language.

Also, aspect markings vary in the two languages, so the learner and his teacher need to bear this in mind. While English permits the inflection of the various verbs used to mark aspect, Abinu does not. So, the teacher needs to guide the learner to pay attention to this, so as to consciously learn the system in English independent of the system in his language. On the whole, in order to help the Abinu learner of English to avoid the transference of the systems for marking tense and aspect in his language to English, the teacher needs to moderately emphasize that the two systems differ and would require independent considerations.

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## **45. The Effects of Language Contact on the Urhobo Phonology**

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A cursory look at the pronunciation patterns of young Urhobo native speakers as they use their language indicates that the phonology of the language is changing rapidly. Areas most affected are the sound system and the vowel harmony system. As reported in the literature, a major factor responsible for such changes is language contact. Our aim in this paper is to examine the extent to which language contact has affected the phonology of Urhobo as spoken by young educated speakers aged between 10 and 25 years all of whom are trilingual in Urhobo, Nigerian Pidgin and English. A total of 60 persons randomly selected from six localities: Abraka, Agbarho, Isiokolo, Otor-Udu, Ughelli and Warri, are involved in this investigation. Variables investigated include age at which the individual first had contact with each of the three languages, how often and with whom each language has been used daily in the last two years, difficulties encountered (if any) with speaking Urhobo, the extent of code-mixing/code-switching while using Urhobo and the effect of all these on the phonology of Urhobo as produced by this group of speakers. One major finding is that children whose chronological first language is Urhobo and use it often tend to retain the sounds and features of the language better. We conclude that although language change is an inevitable, especially in this era of globalization, the pace can be slowed down if parents create the enabling environment for their children to acquire their mother tongue very early in life and maintain its use in the home.

### **Introduction**

Language contact occurs when speakers of two or more languages interact closely such that their languages influence each other. For most societies in the world today, language contact is inevitable as a result of globalization which has made contact between people and goods and services much easier. Common products of language contact are bilingualism and multilingualism depending on the number of languages available for use by speakers in the particular community. A major effect of language contact is language change which could manifest in either borrowing of lexical items mainly from the dominant language into the less dominant language(s), changes in language structure or even language shift, both of which also affect the less dominant language. When this happens, the less dominant language is on the path of death and could become extinct if not checked.

Our aim in this work is to examine the effect of language contact on the phonology of Urhobo, a southwestern Edoid language spoken in the southern part of Delta State, Nigeria. The language interacts closely with English (Nigeria's official language used for education, administration, upward social mobility, personal and group communication, etc.), the Nigerian Pidgin (NP) (the most widely spoken language in the



state but with no official status), and other indigenous languages located within the same geographical area: Itsekiri, Izon Uvwie and Ukwuani. Moreover, since the area is in the oil-rich Niger-Delta region, there is a high level of social mobility and open social network occasioned by the large number of people from all walks of life who come there for work or business with the oil companies and other government and non-governmental establishments. Consequently, most people in this area are multilingual, being competent in at least a mother tongue language, English and the Nigerian Pidgin.

The subjects of our study are young people aged between 10 and 25 years. These were chosen for two main reasons: first, the vibrancy with which this group uses a language is a pointer to the level of intergenerational transfer of that language. Second, by the age of ten years, a normal person would have developed adult native speaker competence level of his/her language.

Ten persons each (five boys and five girls) were randomly selected from six locations that cut across the language area, namely, Warri, Ughelli (both relatively big cities and local government headquarters), Otor-Udu, Isiokolo (both semi-urban towns and local government headquarters), Abraka (a University town), and Agbarho (a semi-urban town where many people who work in Warri live and where the standard variety of Urhobo is spoken). This gave a total of sixty persons. All the subjects have lived in the localities for a minimum of five years and have had at least five years of formal education in the English-medium schools. They all speak English, NP and Urhobo. Our focus was on language use at home and in the community so our subjects were selected from those with Urhobo parentage.

Variables investigated include age at which the subjects first came in contact with each of the three languages involved in the contact, how often each language has been used and with whom on a daily basis within the last two years, the extent of code-switching and code-mixing while speaking Urhobo, difficulties encountered with speaking Urhobo and how these have impacted on the phonetic/phonological features of the Urhobo produced by them. The idea here is that since most Urhobo children benefit from formal education in the English-medium schools and use NP very frequently, we wanted to know the quality of Urhobo they would bequeath to their own children in due time. Data were collected using a twenty-item questionnaire that elicited information on the first five issues above. In addition, each subject was requested to speak for about ten minutes either about him/herself or about their favourite traditional meal; these were recorded using a tape recorder and later analyzed based on the researcher's perception. This enabled us identify the phonetic/phonological features that we needed to pay attention to.

## **Presentation of findings**

### *1. Age at which Subjects First Made Contact with the Three Languages*

Here, interest was on finding out the chronological order of acquisition of the three languages, English, NP and Urhobo by the age of 5 years. At first, many of our subjects, especially those who grew up in Warri, had difficulty telling which language between

Urhobo and NP was their chronological first language because, according to them both languages were used interchangeably in most cases.

In the Table 1 below, the age factor has been sub-divided into two groups for the sake of convenience: Group 1 comprises subjects aged between 10 and 18 years and there are 36 altogether (6 per location) while Group 2 comprises those aged between 19 and 25 years and there are 24 altogether (4 per location). The languages are listed in chronological order. (Note: G1 = Group 1, G2 = Group 2.)

**Table 1:** *Language Acquisition in Chronological Order*

| City:               | Warri |    | Ughelli |    | Otor-Udu |    | Isiokolo |    | Abraka |    | Agbarho |    |
|---------------------|-------|----|---------|----|----------|----|----------|----|--------|----|---------|----|
|                     | G1    | G2 | G1      | G2 | G1       | G2 | G1       | G2 | G1     | G2 | G1      | G2 |
| Urhobo- NP- English | 1     | 1  | 3       | 2  | 3        | 3  | 3        | 3  | 1      | 1  | 3       | 2  |
| NP- English- Urhobo | 4     | 2  | 2       | 1  | 2        | 1  | 2        | 1  | 2      | 1  | 2       | 1  |
| English- NP- Urhobo | 1     | 1  | 1       | 1  | 1        | 0  | 1        | 0  | 3      | 2  | 1       | 1  |

The table above reveals the following patterns of language acquisition:

- a) Urhobo- NP- English = 43%
- b) NP- English- Urhobo = 35%
- c) English- NP- Urhobo = 22%

The immediate conclusion from this is that more people had contact with Urhobo first and this should guarantee the stability of the language but this is not actually so. A breakdown of Table 1 reveals that subjects in Group 1 had less exposure to Urhobo before the age of 5 years than subjects in Group 2. This is in spite of numerous efforts being made by individuals and groups to encourage parents to make Urhobo the language of the home and use it with their children as early as possible. Whereas 39% of Group 1 subjects got exposed to Urhobo first, 50% of those in Group 2 got exposed to Urhobo first. The table also reveals that those who acquired Urhobo first resided mainly in Ughelli, Otor-Udu, Isiokolo and Agbarho; NP was the first language for the majority of subjects from Warri while English was first for the majority of those from Abraka. Thus, location and the utility value of a particular language has been found to play a role in parents' choice of the language they use with their children. This is aside from socio-economic considerations. Warri is a cosmopolitan city, a so-called 'oil city' with three indigenous languages: Itsekiri, Izon and Urhobo and a host of other Nigerian and foreign languages that interact closely within a small geographical area. For effective communication, therefore, the utility value for NP in Warri is higher than for the other two languages under consideration. It has in fact grown to be a creole among young Warri NP users (cf. Elugbe and Omamor 1991). Abraka is a university town with an elitist population, making English the language with the highest utility value there. As for the other four locations, although they are relatively large towns with a number of government and private establishments in each of them, they are more traditional settings, making Urhobo have the highest utility value there.

## 2. Order of Language Preference and with whom

For this variable, we were interested in finding out the order of language preference, i.e. the frequency of use of each of these languages on a daily basis within the last two years.

**Table 2: Order of Language Preference**

| City:               | Warri |    | Ughelli |    | Otor-Udu |    | Isiokolo |    | Abraka |    | Agbarho |    |
|---------------------|-------|----|---------|----|----------|----|----------|----|--------|----|---------|----|
|                     | G1    | G2 | G1      | G2 | G1       | G2 | G1       | G2 | G1     | G2 | G1      | G2 |
| Urhobo- NP- English | 1     | 1  | 2       | 1  | 2        | 2  | 2        | 2  | 1      | 1  | 2       | 1  |
| NP- English- Urhobo | 4     | 2  | 3       | 2  | 3        | 1  | 3        | 1  | 2      | 2  | 3       | 2  |
| English- NP- Urhobo | 1     | 1  | 1       | 1  | 1        | 1  | 1        | 1  | 3      | 1  | 1       | 1  |

The results show that in terms of language preference, the order can be summarized as follows:

- a) NP–English–Urhobo = 47%
- b) Urhobo-NP-English = 30%
- c) English-NP-Urhobo = 23%.

Language preference for Group 1 was: NP = 50%, Urhobo = 28%, English = 22% while for Group 2 it was: NP = 42%, Urhobo = 33% and English = 25%.

A comparison of Tables 1 and 2 reveals that although 43% came in contact with Urhobo first of the three languages, the preferred language as determined by the frequency of use by speakers is not Urhobo but NP. In specific terms, the pattern of acquisition and language preference is unchanged with the Warri groups while in Ughelli and Agbarho, NP acquires more speakers in both groups. In Otor-Udu and Isiokolo, NP acquires more speakers in Group 1 whereas English is the benefiting language in Group 2, while in Abraka no change in Group 1 but NP benefits in Group 2. The trend therefore is that the number of Urhobo speakers is dwindling among young people, a fact that spells doom for the language if not checked.

Our subjects also claim that Urhobo is most frequently used with illiterate/older relatives and community members, less frequently with their parents and rarely with their siblings and friends. 60% of those who live in Ughelli, Otor-Udu, Isiokolo and Agbarho claim that their parents frequently speak to them in Urhobo but tolerate their responses which are usually in NP. 50% of subjects resident in Abraka and 40% of those in Warri claim that their parents sometimes speak to them in Urhobo and more often in English or NP but their responses are always in English or NP. In fact, only five persons of the entire group of 60 persons (i.e. one person per location except Warri) claimed that the most frequently used language in their homes was Urhobo because of their parents' insistence but even at that, a lot of NP is still used between siblings and their friends.

## 3. Extent of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing

52 subjects, i.e. 87% agreed that they frequently code-switch and code-mix their Urhobo with NP and English; in fact, a few told me that it was impossible to speak Urhobo

without “mixing it with NP and English, if not, it will not be sweet”. Besides, there are lots of loan words from English into Urhobo, an indication that all is not well with Urhobo. Examples from our data include:

- |                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. <b>Mi ji maree</b>              | ‘I’m not yet married’           |
| b. <b>Oni mę yi pe iskufisi mę</b> | ‘My mother pays my school fees’ |
| c. <b>Me laiki ukodo</b>           | ‘I like ukodo (a local dish)’   |

We observe that as more and more loanwords enter into the Urhobo lexicon unchecked, most of the indigenous words would be lost and our young people would lose track of what actually constitutes their language.

#### 4. *Difficulties Speakers Encounter*

A major difficulty speakers claim they encounter with speaking Urhobo is the inability to find competent speakers among their siblings and friends to help them improve on their performance. Of the 20 subjects who live in Warri and Abraka, 12 i.e. 60% claim that most of the people they interact with at home and in the communities prefer to use NP or English not only because of the higher socio-economic value which the languages command but also because the communities are highly multilingual. As for those who live in the other localities, 32 subjects out of 40, i.e. 80% claim that speaking Urhobo makes them feel “local” and since they do not need it for education or to get good jobs, they would rather spend more time using NP which they consider to be the language of the youth and English which is the language for a better tomorrow.

#### 5. *Changing Phonetic/Phonological Features Found in our Data*

##### 5a. *Sound Change*

The data collected revealed that a number of Urhobo sounds are either being weakened or lost and replaced by NP/English sounds. The result is that some of the words containing those sounds have either become ambiguous or lost meaning. Particularly affected are the following sounds:

- i. /c/ the voiceless palatal plosive (spelt as **ch** in writing). 46 persons, i.e. 77% of our subjects could not produce this sound but replaced it with either [tʃ] the voiceless palatal affricate or [ʃ] the voiceless palatal fricative both of which are available in English and the fricative is available in Urhobo and NP. As expected, Group 1 subjects had more difficulty producing [c] than those in Group 2. Below are some examples:

|                  |                       |   |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| /ucebro/ uchebro | ‘advice’              | - | [utʃebro] or [uʃebro] |
| /ɔcuko/ ɔchuko   | ‘a name’              | - | [ɔtʃuko] or [ɔʃuko]   |
| /eca/ echa       | ‘something forbidden’ | - | [etʃa] or [eʃa]       |

- ii. /ɟ/ the voiced palatal plosive (spelt as dj in writing). 48 persons, i.e. 80% of our subjects could not produce this sound but replaced it with [ɖʒ] or [ʒ]. As with the voiceless counterpart mentioned above, both the affricate and the fricative are available in English but the fricative is available in Urhobo and NP. Examples are as follows:

|         |          |                                     |   |                     |
|---------|----------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| /ɟe/    | udje     | ‘a type of traditional music/dance’ | - | [udʒe] or [uʒe]     |
| /oɟuvũ/ | odjuvwun | ‘heaven’                            | - | [odʒuvũ] or [oʒuvũ] |
| /oɟa/   | odja     | ‘soap’                              | - | [odʒa] or [oʒa]     |

(Note: [oʒa] is homophonous with the word that means ‘suffering’)

Note that the use of the affricates [tʃ] and [ɖʒ] was found mainly among subjects from Abraka where they exist as allophones of /c/ and /ɟ/ respectively. Interestingly though, it was also noticed that when it came to pronouncing loanwords from English which have the palatal affricates, the palatal fricatives rather than the affricates were used by the same Abraka speakers. The following are examples:

|          |          |                |         |
|----------|----------|----------------|---------|
| /ɖʒʌɖʒ/  | ‘jugde’  | is produced as | [iʒɔʒi] |
| /ɖʒɒn/   | ‘John’   | is produced as | [iʒɔni] |
| /tʃek/   | ‘cheque’ | is produced as | [iʃɛki] |
| /tʃɜ:tʃ/ | ‘church’ | is produced as | [iʃɔʃi] |

- iii. /r/ the voiceless alveolar trill (spelt as rh in writing) is a distinct sound from /ɾ/ the voiced alveolar tap (spelt as r in writing) but in the speech of 48 persons, i.e. 80% of these young ones, both sounds were rendered as a trill with some voicing, akin to that in NP and English. As a result, the distinctions in the pronunciation of the following words no longer exist:

|       |          |     |       |               |                  |       |
|-------|----------|-----|-------|---------------|------------------|-------|
| /eri/ | ‘spirit’ | and | /eɾi/ | ‘fish’        | both have become | [eri] |
| /re/  | ‘come’   | and | /re/  | ‘eat, finish’ | both have become | [re]  |
| /uri/ | ‘a law’  | and | /uri/ | ‘200’         | both have become | [uri] |

- iv. The voiceless velar fricative /x/ (spelt as h in writing) has two allophones [x] and [h] which are in free variation. While [x] is more common in the speech of older speakers, [h] is more common with younger speakers, again a tilt towards NP and English.
- v. The voiced velar fricative /ɣ/ (spelt as **gh** in writing) is replaced by 34 persons i.e. 57% of our subjects with the voiced velar plosive [g] which is available in all three languages. The following are some examples:

- |                 |                  |            |          |
|-----------------|------------------|------------|----------|
| /uɣegbe/ughegbe | ‘mirror’         | has become | [ugegbe] |
| /uɣɔtɔ/ughɔtɔn  | ‘name of a town’ | has become | [ugɔtɔ]  |
| /beɣe/ beghe    | ‘wander’         | has become | [bege]   |
- vi. The voiced labio-dental approximant /v/ (spelt as **vw** in writing) was replaced by 36 persons, i.e. 60% of our subjects with the labial-velar approximant [w] which is available in the three languages. For example:
- |                  |                                       |            |         |                              |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|------------|---------|------------------------------|
| /avãre/ avwanre  | ‘we, us’                              | has become | [awãre] | homophonous with             |
| /awãre/          | ‘ancient’                             |            |         | but for differences in tone. |
| /vɛdɛ/ vwɛdɛ     | ‘a name’                              | has become | [wɛdɛ]  |                              |
| /rukɛvɛ/ rukɛvwɛ | ‘a name that means “benevolent to me” |            |         | is pronounced as             |
| [rukɛwɛ]         | which means “benevolent to you”       |            |         |                              |
- vii. As for the vowels, Urhobo has seven oral vowels /i, e, ɛ, a, ɔ, o, u/ but nine phonological vowels \*[i, ɪ, e, ɛ, a, ɔ, o, ʊ, u]. The vowels \*ɪ and \*ʊ have merged completely at the surface level with e and o respectively resulting in the awkward behavior of e and o sometimes as mid vowels and sometimes as close vowels in grammatical constructions. This affects the vowel harmony system of the language as we shall show later.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that the contact between Urhobo, English and NP has resulted in many Urhobo sounds being lost or becoming more like English and NP sounds.

### 5b. Loss of Vowel Harmony

Language contact has also resulted in a significant loss of the vowel harmony system. Urhobo operates a root-controlled [ATR] harmony system which affects vowels of affixes and clitics (monosyllabic pronouns and grammatical particles). Based on vowel harmony, Urhobo vowels are divided into two sets: Set 1 comprises i, e, o, u while Set 2 comprises ɛ, ɐ, a, ɔ, o and vowels within each set harmonize to a large extent when they occur together in grammatical constructions. Note that the vowels e and o occur in both sets. (For a fuller account of the behavior of Urhobo vowels see Aziza (2008)). Affixes and clitics have two variants each and the verb stem vowel selects the appropriate variant to go with it. Almost all our subjects were guilty of the inability to make the correct vowel harmony distinctions. Below are some examples of vowel harmony violations found during the oral segment of our data collection. (Note: \* indicates incorrect sequence, the incorrect form of the clitic is underlined):

\*Mi ji mɾɛ iruoo    instead of:    Me je mɾɛ iruoo    ‘I haven’t got a job’

(Note: the vowel of the verb **mɾɛ** ‘see’ belongs to Set 2 and should choose the pronoun and particle variants **me** and **je** respectively that are compactable with Set



2 verb stem vowels but 75% of our subjects regularly chose the Set 1 variants **mi** and **ji** respectively and attempts to point the error out to them failed to yield good results.)

\**ɔsɛ mɛ ohwo rɛ Okpara, oni mɛ ki rha ohwo rɛ Ovu* instead of:

*ɔsɛ mɛ ohwo rɛ Okpara, oni mɛ ke rha ohwo rɛ Ovu*

‘My father is from Okpara while my mother is from Ovu’

\**Me ji bre mu rɛ aye* instead of: *Mi ji bre mu rɛ ayee*

‘I’ve not paid a woman’s bride-price/I am not married’.

Note that *Me ji bre mu rɛ ayee* actually means ‘We have not paid a woman’s bride-price/We am not married’

## 6. Discussion

From the data presented in this work, Urhobo is undergoing rapid changes such that a number of its unique sounds and features are giving way to NP and English equivalents. In fact, even the tone system which plays both lexical and grammatical functions is being seriously anglicized thereby creating meaningless or ambiguous sequences. However, it was noted that those among our subjects who acquired Urhobo as their chronological L1 and used it frequently within the first 5 years of age retained the Urhobo sounds better than those who acquired it later. This was irrespective of whether or not Urhobo has remained their preferred language within the last two years. Those who acquired English or NP as their chronological L1 had more difficulty identifying the sounds and features under investigation. The results from this work confirm that the earlier a child is exposed to a language the better will be his performance in it.

As has been noted by Emenanjo (2010) among others, language contact is a significant factor in language endangerment. When a small language such as Urhobo is in contact and in competition with a big language or a language of wider communication (LWC) as English or NP (and in this case, both), language shift invariably takes place irrespective of the level of language loyalty exhibited by speakers of the small language. As has been reported extensively by Fishman (19), language shift is the onset of language endangerment.

Obviously, Urhobo is already endangered with less than half of her young population able to communicate effectively in the language. Besides, many of those who even speak it now do so with an anglicized flavor either because they want to show that they have gone to school or they do not know what is correct because their parents did not correct them when it was necessary. We therefore wonder the quality of Urhobo (if any) that would be spoken in some 50 years time. We project that even if Urhobo is spoken at that time, it would be critically different both in structure and form from what currently exists.

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**7. Conclusion**

Since a language belongs first and foremost to its native speakers, the responsibility of ensuring its purity, appreciation and promotion rests squarely on them. Urhobo parents, especially those in the elite class who act as role models in their communities, must ensure that they bequeath their native language to their children, just as they enjoyed from their own parents. They must insist on the use of Urhobo as the language of the home, teach their children to appreciate and promote it wherever they go and refuse to be intimidated by the size and utility value of NP and English in the multilingual environment. Charity, they say, begins at home and this includes the survival of our native languages.

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## **46. Affixation in Obolo**

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Affixation is one of the word formation processes in human language. This paper examines affixation in Obolo. It describes the combination of affixes in the formation of words in Obolo. This is done by a careful study of derivational morphological processes, inflectional morphological processes and affix ordering in Obolo. By its morphology, Obolo is classified as an agglutinating. This study is important for a metastructural documentation of a Niger-Congo language.

### **Preliminary Remarks**

Obolo is a lower cross language under the Niger Congo phylum (Lewis, 2009). The language is spoken in Eastern Obolo Local Government Area in Akwa Ibom State and Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State. The language can be differentiated into three main dialects: eastern Obolo dialect (Okoroete, Ibot Obolo), western Obolo dialect (Ataba, Asarama, Unyeada) and central dialect (Ngo).

This paper examines the role of affixation as it affects nouns and verbs. In a broad sense, this paper dwells on the derivational and inflectional morphology of Obolo. Attention is also given to affix order and the typology of the language. This study is delimited to central Obolo dialect as spoken in Ebukuma town in Andoni Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Morphology is the structure of words. The word is one of the fundamental units of linguistic structure. The ability of man to use language creatively is manifest in word play. (Akmajian et al 2007:11).

In the analysis or the study of the structure of words, the smallest meaningful element is known as a morpheme. In other words, a word can be divided into parts. The smallest meaningful realizable part that can be derived from division is the morpheme. A morpheme can be bound or free. A free morpheme is an independent language unit that can exist alone. A bound morpheme must always attach itself to another morpheme for semantic realization.

The study is focused on affixation. Affixation is the process of adding an affix to the base- form or root of a word (Lyons 2009:103). Using a descriptive framework, this paper examines affixation in Obolo. Affixation in Obolo will be examined in this manner: derivational processes, inflectional processes, affix ordering and conclusion.

### **Derivation**

Derivation is possible through the operation of derivational morphemes. Derivational operation is seen as the various ways and processes of deriving or forming words through the addition of a derivational affix. This operation is class changing as it typically induces

a change in the grammatical class function, and the meaning of the word which it is attached (Ndimele 1999: 40).

### **Formation of Nominals**

A noun can be derived from a verb through prefixation to a simple vowel. In literature, such derived nouns are called verbal nouns, deverbal nouns and verbal derivatives because the verb stems often retain their formal characteristics (Omoruyi 1990: 106). In Obolo, nominalization is possible through derivational processes wherein nouns are derived from verbs.

| 3. | <i>Affix</i> | <i>Base form (Verb)</i> | <i>Derived (Noun)</i> |
|----|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| a) | u-           | riaak<br>pray           | u-riaak<br>prayer     |
| b) | ɪ-           | fit<br>play             | ɪ-fit<br>play         |
| c) | o-           | chak<br>laugh           | o-chak<br>shame       |
| d) | u-           | gbana<br>bless          | u-gbana<br>blessing   |
| e) | m-           | bát<br>dirty            | n-bát<br>dirt         |
| f) | n-           | dô<br>marry             | n-dô<br>marriage      |
| g) | n-           | ròm<br>create           | n-ròm<br>creation     |
| h) | u-           | che<br>give             | u-che<br>gift         |
| i) | m-           | kpulu<br>rule           | m-kpulu<br>government |

The affixes shown above are influenced by vowel harmony. Vowel harmony explains the relationship between the root vowels and the prefixes of nouns. The root vowels determine the prefixes. Hence, the vowels harmonize from right to left. Uche (2000:60) explains and as could be seen in data presented above, ‘a noun with /e/ does not take /a/ in the prefix.

Also / / never occurs as a prefix except with / :/. The strongest tendency is for the root vowel to copy itself in the prefix.’ The data also shows cases of homorganic nasal assimilation from right to left where the prefix takes the place of assimilation of the consonant following it.

### Gerundivization

Traditionally, the gerund is a noun in participle form derived from a verb. Gerunds can be derived from verbs by reduplication (Crystal 1997: 20). Consider the following nouns derived by reduplication.

|    |             |       |                |           |
|----|-------------|-------|----------------|-----------|
| 4. | <i>Verb</i> |       | <i>Nominal</i> |           |
| a) | ge          | write | i- ge- ge      | writing   |
| b) | sulu        | beat  | o su-sut       | beating   |
| c) | bene        | begin | i-bê-bênê      | beginning |

Derivation is majorly used for the formation of nouns from verbs. However, the following is an example of derivation by reduplication from a verb to an adjective.

|    |             |     |               |       |
|----|-------------|-----|---------------|-------|
| 5. | kàlà (Verb) | fry | ékàkàlà (Adj) | fried |
|----|-------------|-----|---------------|-------|

### Inflection

Inflectional morphemes perform class-maintaining operations. They modify a word without change in its syntactic category. In Obolo, inflection is best shown by the realization of verb forms. Verb forms vary according to tense, aspect, perfect, mood, negation and focus.

### Tense in Obolo

Tense marking shows an action in relation to the time of occurrence. In Obolo, only the future tense is well marked. Hence, (a binary tense system which recognize future and non-future split is proposed by Aaron (1994). This is illustrated in the schematic diagram below:

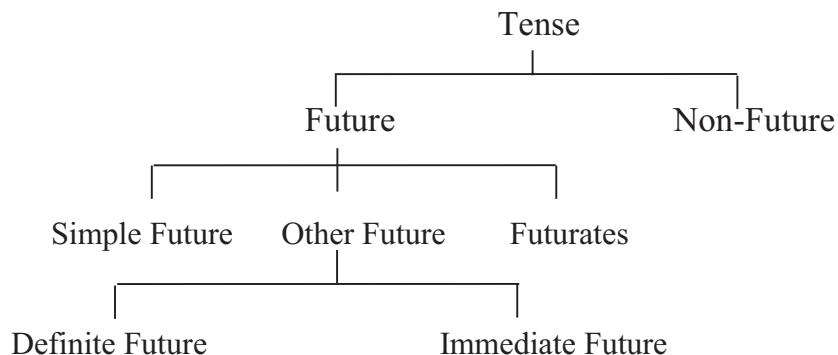


Figure 1: Classification of Tense in Obolo (Aaron in Enene 1998: 39)



Future tense is well morphologized as presented below:

| Person | Simple Future | Simple Negative Future | Definite Future | Immediate Future |
|--------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1sg    | mâ            | kpâ                    | bâ              | mâ-ni-           |
| 2sg    | mô            | kpô                    | bô              | mó-ni-           |
| 3sg    | mô            | kpô                    | bê              | mó-ni-           |
| 1pl    | mê            | kpê                    | bê              | mê-ni-           |
| 2pl    | mê            | kpê                    | bê              | mê-ni-           |
| 3pl    | mê            | kpê                    | bê              | mê-ni-           |

Table 1: *Adapted from Enene 1998: 40 – 45.*

This table shows that inflection in Obolo is context- sensitive because the forms for first person, second person and third person vary (Grohmann 2006: 5). It is important to note that all verbs in Obolo are person marked and bear TAM markers. Although the imperative is marked by the absence of a subject prefix in the singular and a tone subject prefix ì in the plural:

6. a) kúp (cut, sg)                                      ì-kêp (cut, pl)  
       b) tét (catch, sg)                                ì- têt (catch, pl).

Consider other verbs below:

| Person | Past (perf) | Present (prog) | Future      |
|--------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1sg    | n-rie (v)   | n-ke-rie       | ma-rie      |
| 2sg    | o-rie (v)   | okaki-rie      | owu-mo-rie  |
| 3sg    | ɪ-rie (v)   | o-ki-rie       | mo-rie      |
| 1pl    | eji-mi-rie  | eji-eki-rie    | eji-me-rie  |
| 2pl    | enyi-mi-rie | enyi-meki-rie  | enyi-me-rie |
| 3pl    | ema-mi-rie  | ema-meki-rie   | ema-me-rie  |

Table 2: *Affirmative*

| Person | Past         | Present          | Future       |
|--------|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| 1sg    | nka-rie      | nkaki-rie        | nkpa-rie     |
| 2sg    | oka-rie      | okaki-rie        | okpo-rie     |
| 3sg    | ika-rie      | ikaki-rie        | ikpo-rie     |
| 1pl    | eji-kpe-rie  | eji-kpe-ki-rie   | eji-kpe-rie  |
| 2pl    | enyi-kpe-rie | enyi-kpe- ki-rie | enyi-kpe-rie |
| 3pl    | ema-kpe-rie  | ema-kpe-ki-rie   | ema-kpe-rie  |

Table 3: *Negative*

### Affix Ordering in Obolo

Spencer (cited in Olusegun 2011) notes that the domain of morphology encapsulates the possible arrangement of morphemes to form words. This arrangement is realized through the relationship or reaction of morphemes in word formation. The arrangement of morphemes in a word is best described through affix ordering. Affix ordering describes the combination of affixes for the derivation of new words and word forms. Affix ordering explains the principles for the combination of affixes in a language.

Derivational processes in Obolo have a simple morphology: prefix + root. Since inflection is beyond simple exponence, affix ordering would be explained in the light of Obolo verbal morphology.

In literature, the following theories are used for the description of affix ordering: Mirror Theory by Baker 1985 and Rice 2000, Onions theory by Bybee 1985 and Nunderlich & Fabin 1994 and Left-Right Theory by Hawkins et al 1985, 1988. There are also the combined Theories by Jelen 2000 and Trommer 2003, 2008 (Trommer 2008: 4). These theories are used to explain affix ordering.

Aronoff and Zheng (2010: 388) explain that affix order in inflection depends on three factors: semantic scope, phonology and morphological templates. Similarly, Keyin (2010: 758) notes that affix ordering often reflects ‘general syntactic or semantic principles. It can also be arbitrary or variable’.

Consider the realization of the following words.

- |       |                                            |                   |
|-------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 7. a) | riooñ<br>(Imperative)                      | Know!             |
| b)    | i-riqoñ<br>3Psg (Present Perf) know        | S/he knows.       |
| c)    | O-riqoñ<br>2Psg (Present Perf) know        | You know.         |
| d)    | O-riqoñ-be<br>2Psg (Present Perf) know REL | You already know. |

As noted earlier, inflection in Obolo is context sensitive. Nominal affixes which vary according to number and person are attached to the root. Consider the following.

- |      |                       |             |
|------|-----------------------|-------------|
| 8.a) | n- riqoñ<br>1sg- know | I know.     |
| b)   | o-riqoñ<br>2sg- know  | You know.   |
| c)   | i-riqoñ<br>3sg- know  | S/he knows. |



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[ SM [ NEG [ AM [ BASE ] ] ] ]

*Figure 2: Obolo Affixes in Layered Morphology*

The ordering presented is in line with the view that morphemes are generally ordered by a strong tendency for semantic scope to be reflected in the linear order of those elements that most transparently reflect meaning (Spencer 2003: 62). The following example (OLBTP Workshop Guide 2009:17) can be presented in layered morphology thus,

12. a)    n - ka-    ki - gban                      I am not listening.  
              1sg   NEG   ASP   listen  
              [ n [ ka [ ki [ gban ] ] ] ]

The morphology of a language determines the typology of the language. In literature, the classical types of language are isolating, agglutinating, inflectional and polysynthetic languages. These are explained briefly by Anderson (1985: 8). An isolating language has a one-to-one ratio of formatives to words. Chinese is a good example of an isolating language. An agglutinating language has complex words of many formatives with transparent boundaries. Turkish serves as a good example. Inflectional languages like Latin has complex words with non-transparent boundaries while polysynthetic languages like Eskimo has complex agglutinative words but affixes that have multiple open classes. By this explanation, Obolo can be classified as an agglutinative language.

### Summary and Conclusion

Affixation shows the combination of affixes to a dependent morpheme. This paper has examined the relationship between affixes and the root of words in Obolo. A description of derivational and inflectional morphological processes was presented. By observation, Obolo is a prefixing language because affixes are attached before and usually a vowel does not occur after the root except the affix – **be** which is a reflective perfect marker. By affixation, nominal affixes, negative marker, aspect markers precede the root in the order of nominal affix, negation and aspect markers.

### Abbreviations

The following abbreviations for features are used in this paper

1: First Person, 2: Second Person, NEG: Negation, SG: Singular, PL: Plural, TAM: Tense Aspect Markers, AM: Aspect Markers, REL: Relative, PERF: Perfect, Convention: —: indicates affixation; morpheme boundary.

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## **47. The Linguistic Features of Ideophones in Etulo**

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The paper discusses the linguistic features of ideophones in the Etulo language – an endangered minority language spoken in Benue State, Nigeria. Primary data were collected from native speakers of the Etulo language resident in Adi, Buruku Local Government Area of Benue State through the use of digital recorders. The paper examines the identified ideophones along the line of the features of ideophones that have been identified cross-linguistically in the literature (Welmers (1973), Maduka-Durunze (1992), Uchechukwu (2007), Muhammed (2012), etc.). The major findings are that ideophones perform both adverbial and adjectival functions in the language. Secondly, tonally, there is preponderance of low tone than high tone in the ideophones studied. Thirdly, in terms of their syllabic structure, Etulo ideophones adhere to the syllable structure of the language, and partial and full reduplication are noticed.

### **1. Introduction**

Ideophone constitutes a distinct word category whose major purpose is to convey meaning on the basis of its sound and patterns. Ideophones in African languages have received adequate attention in the literature following Doke (1935) seminal work. These studies span different levels of linguistics: phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic. For instance, Maduka has extensively studied it from phonosemantic perspective (1982, 1983-4, 1988, 1991, 1992) and Ayowale (1983, 1984 etc.). Some other scholars have analyzed their distributional patterns and functions as well as the phonological properties of ideophones. Uchechukwu (2007) identifies the pairing of ideophones in Igbo to show contrast with regard to their tones and meaning. He calls this phenomenon ‘ideophonic pairing’. Also, studies in phonology such as Newman (1989), Mohammed (1996, 2012) and syntax (Newman, 1968, 1988) etc., abound. However, it is obvious that quite a lot has been written about ideophones in some language groups, but not much has been written about this in some other language groups to which Etulo belongs. It is against this backdrop that this paper attempts to give a preliminary analysis of the features of ideophones with data from Etulo, an endangered language of the Idomoid group of the West Benue Congo branch of Niger Congo family, in order to ascertain its distributional functions and to see if the features identified can be confirmed in the language. The analysis presented here is based on the properties of ideophones as identified in Doke’s (1935) and Cole’s (1955) definitions. All tones are marked and phonemic symbols are used as the Etulo orthography is still in progress. The rest of this section will give an overview of ideophone. While section 2 looks at the phonological and morphological properties with regard to syllable structure and reduplication, section



3 discusses ideophones in Etulo with focus on the semantic and syntactic properties. Section 4 forms the summary and conclusion.

### **1.1 Ideophone – an overview**

Ideophone is a category with distinct class of words. It performs varied functions as identified in Doke (1935:118) definition as "... a vivid representation of an idea in sound. A word often onomatopoeic which describes a predicate, qualificative or adverb in respect of manner, color, sound, smell, action, state or intensity". In addition, Doke (1935:185) pointed out reduplication as one of the common feature of ideophones. Similarly, Cole (1955:370 cited in Newman, 1968) characterizes ideophones as "descriptive of sound, colour, smell, manner, appearance, state, action or intensity... [that is] vivid vocal images or representation of visual, auditory and other sensory or mental experiences". According to Trask (1993:131-132) an ideophone is "one of a grammatically distinct class of words, occurring in certain languages, which typically express either distinctive sounds or visually distinctive types of action." Crystal (1997:189) on the other hand, defines an ideophone as a "...term used in linguistics and phonetics for any vivid representation of an idea in sound, such as occurs through onomatopoeia."

On the other hand, Welmers (1973) in Mohammed (2012) identifies vowel repetition, tonal peculiarity and reduplication as typical properties of ideophonic forms. For Mpande (1992:120) "an ideophone is an independent entity that sustains a close relationship between meaning and sound (i.e., tone, vowel length, and other physical properties)".

However, the distributional patterns of ideophones vary in languages. Maduka (1991) captures this phenomenon with regard to the Igbo language. According to him, Igbo ideophones can occur at the nominal position, adverbial position or pro-verbal positions. Newman (1968:116) lends support to this fact in answering the questions: 'what is ideophone?' and 'how do they function?' He argues that a definition of 'ideophone' should be a language independent phono-semantic characterization whereas a syntactic description of ideophones must be language specific. Similarly, with regard to word classes as Bodomo (2006:213) posits, "word classes may have the same taxonomy from language to language and [...] ideophones are existent in some languages but not in others. Also, the constellation of word class relationship differs cross linguistically". This is to say that ideophones may share the same features across languages but these features function differently from language to language. We shall in the ensuing section look at syllable structure of Etulo ideophones.

## **2. The Syllable in Etulo**

One of the features of Etulo ideophones is the syllable structure. Etulo is a no coda language. Hence, it is an open syllable language since consonants do not end a word. Ezenwafor (2009) identifies five basic syllable structures viz.: V, N, CV, CVV (where VV can represent a long monophthong or diphthong) and CCV (where CC represents a

consonant cluster). These syllable structures can be exemplified in the ideophonic words below:

1. CVCVCVCV

- |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| a. kwók kwók kwók | ‘walking noisily’     |
| b. gígì gígì gígì | ‘shivering profusely’ |
| c. pàpà pàpà pàpà | ‘flight of a bird’    |

2. CVVVVV

- |          |                  |
|----------|------------------|
| d. tùùùù | ‘horrible smell’ |
| e. bíùùù | ‘extremely dark’ |

Observe that in the examples (1a-e), the possible forms of ideophone syllable are CVCVCV and CVVVVV. They consist of two, three or four syllables. The vowel of the first syllable is consistently copied on the syllable following it. That is to say, Etulo ideophones are characterized by reduplications of one or two syllables, a series of identical vowels, and by tonal patterns consisting either of all high tones or of all low tones. The tonal quality which is consistently a low tone or high tone as in the two to three syllable word but low tone seems to be more prevalent. In the next section, we shall look at the reduplication of ideophones which involves coping of single or more syllables and/or morphemes.

## 2.1 Reduplication

Reduplication is a morphological process; a feature of Etulo ideophones, and indeed most African languages. Ayowale (1989:16) defines it as a morphological process whereby a copy of a morpheme (free or bound) in either slightly altered or identical form, is added to the stem in a syntagmatic relationship to produce a new word. Rubino (2005:11) cited in Uchechukwu (2007:25) describes reduplication as a “systematic repetition of phonological materials within a word for semantic or grammatical purposes”. This phenomenon has been evidenced in different languages. However, ideophone in Etulo follows two reduplicative patterns – full and partial reduplication. While full reduplication expresses a range of meanings such as quantity (i.e. plurality, distribution, intensity and emphasis), partial reduplication connotes mainly emphasis and intensity (Ayowale, 1984, 1988). Muhammed (2012:590) also notes that Hausa ideophones demonstrate a reduplicate and triplicate morphological structure. Similarly, Etulo ideophones whether partial or full can undergo multiple reduplications. The more an ideophone is reduplicated, the higher the degree of intensity and emphasis it conveys. Instances of reduplication are as follows:

(i) *Full reduplication*

- |      |                |                     |
|------|----------------|---------------------|
| (3)a | dómó           | ‘slow’              |
|      | dómó-dómó-dómó | ‘continuously slow’ |

---

|       |                              |                                                           |
|-------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| b.    | lèbè<br>lèbè-lèbè-lèbè       | ‘sluggish’<br>‘continuously sluggish’                     |
| c.    | ńá<br>ńá-ńá-ńá               | ‘walking arrogantly’<br>‘walking arrogantly continuously’ |
| d.    | pià<br>pià-pià-pià           | ‘sweet’<br>‘extremely sweet’                              |
| (ii)  | <i>Partial reduplication</i> |                                                           |
| (4)a. | plédédédé                    | ‘whitish’                                                 |
| b.    | fiaa                         | ‘of a sudden lightening’                                  |

The reduplication of these ideophones can be indefinite and depicts continuity of the action that the ideophones denote. Ideophones in Etulo appeal to taste, smell, color, etc., this will form our next section.

### 3. Semantic properties

Semantically, Etulo ideophones provide a lively means of expressing perception of a state or event. The examples (5 & 6) suggest the speaker’s perception of an action:

- (5) kpùùùù                    ‘of a sound/explosion/bang’
- (6) ání fọ èlá òdàkàà gbè lá kpùùùù  
1SG hear voice gun sounding IDPH  
‘I hear the gun sound explosively’

Also, there are ideophones that appeal to taste, smell and color as exemplified in (7a-g) and in the sentences (8-10):

- (7) a. núnònónò            ‘sour taste’  
b. pià-pià-pià           ‘sugary taste’  
c. tùùùù                ‘horrible/terrible smell’  
d. gbúmgbē            ‘pleasant smell’  
e. bíùùù                ‘extremely black’  
f. plédédédé            ‘whitish’  
g. jònjònjòn            ‘reddish’

#### *Ideophone of taste*

- (8) èníádē né lì piàpiàpià  
palmwine this is IDPH  
‘This palmwine is too sugary’

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*Ideophone of smell*

- (9) òzúù né lì kwò tùùùù  
house this is smell IDPH  
'This house has a stench odour'

*Ideophone of colour*

- (10) ògìsè náà túnzè plédédédé  
person that white IDPH  
'That person is very fair'

In addition, Etulo ideophones also perform different syntactic functions such as modifying verbs and adjectives. That is to say they occur after an adjective or verb they modify.

- (11) ò lè kyíké kwákwákwá  
3SG is walk/go IDPH  
'she/he is walking sluggishly'

- (12) ò lè f́áatf́á gbùgbùgbùgbù  
3SG is shaking IDPH  
'He/she is shivering vigorously'

- (13) òmbè né lì gádàgádà  
place this is IDPH  
'This place is rowdy'

- (14) òf́è né lì jògòjògò  
chair this is IDPH  
'This chair is shaking'

- (15) ò lé mbímbí bíùùù  
3SG is dark IDPH  
'He/she is very dark'

- (16) ògìsè náà túnzè plédédédé  
person that white IDPH  
'That person is very fair'

- (17) òzúù né lì kwò tùùùù  
house this is smell IDPH  
'This house has a stench odour'

---

The ideophones in examples (11-14) function as adverb of manner, state and action respectively while those in examples (15-17) act as ideophonic-intensifiers; that is to say they emphasize the adjective they modify.

#### **4. Conclusion**

This study has shown that Etulo ideophones adhere to the syllable structure i.e., it forms the CV and CVV structure. Semantically, Etulo ideophones provide a lively means of expressing one's emotions, or perception of a state or event, just as they also appeal to taste, smell and color. Morphologically, just like in other languages, Etulo ideophones have high incidence of reduplication and triplication. The nature of repetition is indefinite such that the higher the number of duplication, the higher the degree of intensity or emphasis. Finally, with regard to syntactic properties, it functions as verb or adjective modifiers and intensifiers. This study is not an exhaustive study and therefore calls for further researches on Etulo ideophones in order to reveal more functions especially with regard to the location of Etulo ideophones within the spectrum of ideophones from a cross-linguistic perspective.

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## **48. On Synonymy in Ìgbuzò-Igbo**

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The paper examines the lexical relation of synonymy in Ìgbuzò Igbo. Using a set of about one hundred synonyms, the paper highlights the diachronic relevance of synonymy and also describes the types, sources and contexts of use of synonyms in the language. The data for the research were sourced from interviews with competent Igbo speakers who are fifty years and above. The paper notes that a good number of Igbo lexical synonyms have diachronic implications, that selectional restriction is a predominant feature of synonymy, and that just like in other natural languages, absolute synonymy is a rare feature in Igbo. The paper concludes that synonymy is a very pervasive semantic relation in the lexicon of the Igbo language.

### **1. Introduction**

Synonymy is a very pervasive semantic relation in the lexicons of human language and, indeed, a highly diachronically relevant phenomenon in the Igbo-Igbo variety. The term comes from a Greek word "sunonumon" meaning "having the same name". It is used in modern semantics to describe the relation of sameness or close similarity in meaning between two or more words/lexemes. Synonyms normally have closely related but not necessarily identical meanings. They are sometimes but not always substituted for each other in all contexts. Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2007) give a very succinct definition of synonymy thus: "a word or expression that have same meaning in some or all contexts. The lexemes, *okpì, èlègèdè, ukwu, akpà, agbumgbu, àbaàzìgàrà and àtùmgbala* are synonyms in Ìgbuzò for "bigness"/ "largeness" and in the English language, the pairs of lexemes: hide/conceal; sofa/couch; pail/bucket; profound/deep; holy/sacred and ghost/spirit are synonyms.

Based on the substitutability or interchangeability of lexemes, linguists have identified two types of synonymy: partial or loose and absolute or strict, and have argued that absolute synonyms are rare, if not, non-existent in natural languages. Absolute synonyms are lexemes which have total identity of meaning in all contexts. They share all the meaning components such as descriptive, social, expressive, and collocational meanings. This would mean that the lexemes can be freely exchanged for each other in all situations and the presence of one for the other would have no effect on the meaning, style or connotations of the other. Partial synonyms are more abundant in natural languages. The paper is therefore a study in lexical semantics. It is a lexical description of synonymy in Igbo-Igbo. With a focus on diachronic relevance, it describes both the linguistic and extra-linguistic/contextual meaning of sets synonyms.

### 1.1 Sense Variation in Synonymy

Semanticists like Leech (1974), Palmer (1981), Cruse (1986), Lobner (2002), Saeed (2003), Hurford, Heasley, and Smith (2007), and Baker (2011) have all identified different types of meaning. While Leech distinguishes seven types namely, conceptual, reflective, social, collocative, affective, connotative and thematic, Cruse (1986) identifies four types: propositional, expressive, evoked and presupposed meanings. Even though the names vary, there seems to be an overlap in the definition and description of the types by these linguists. As found in the literature, propositional meaning is the same as conceptual, descriptive, denotative or logical meaning. It is the primary, core or basic meaning which provides the basis for judging a word or utterance as true or false. The expressive meaning relates to the speakers' attitude or feelings rather than to what the words or utterances refer to.

A lexeme is made up of different components of meaning. It may consist of both conceptual/propositional meaning as well as of social, affective or evoked meanings. The word *ukwu* "largeness/"bigness" in Igbo has inherently different shades of meaning. It has the propositional meaning of "bigness", a social meaning of "being famous or "being great", and is also collocationally restricted. The phrases, *ụnọ ukwu* "big house" and *dibịa ukwu* "great/famous doctor" are connotatively different. Other examples are given in the table below:

**Table 1:** *Meaning discrimination in synonyms*

| S/N | Synonyms                            | Conceptual meaning | Other Meanings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----|-------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | <i>emume</i><br><i>omelifē</i>      | 'feast'            | While <i>emume</i> refers to traditional ceremonies, feasts and rites, <i>omelifē</i> refers to the Christian, e.g. <i>emume ụlọ</i> 'Ulọ festival', <i>emume iwā ji</i> 'New yam festival', but <i>omelifē</i> Christmas, <i>omelifē</i> St. Augustine.       |
| 2.  | <i>mmà</i><br><i>ọpịà</i>           | 'cutlass'          | <i>Mmà</i> is more or less generic or neutral denoting all types of instrument for cutting, while <i>ọpịà</i> is reserved for cutlass.                                                                                                                         |
| 3.  | <i>okookpòlò</i><br><i>òkolọbịà</i> | 'bachelor'         | While both mean <i>bachelor</i> , <i>okookpòlò</i> connotes some impediment to the state, but <i>òkolọbịà</i> has not such connotation. <i>Òkolọbịà</i> has additional sense of <i>virility</i> and <i>valour</i> which is not inherent in <i>okookpòlò</i> .  |
| 4.  | <i>ozili</i><br><i>ụzọ</i>          | 'road'             | Both words can be used to mean 'road', while <i>ozili</i> is sometimes used to refer to 'tarred road', <i>ụzọ</i> is more generic and can refer to both tarred and <i>untarred</i> . <i>Ụzọ</i> has additional meaning of <i>door</i> or even <i>destiny</i> . |

|    |       |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----|-------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5. | ìkpa  | ‘pauper’ | Both refer to a poor person, but while <i>ìkpa</i> describes one who is poor, humble and needs help, <i>ogbèi</i> describes one who is poor and arrogant. Even though the two words share the propositional meaning of ‘poor’, they have different social meaning. |
|    | ogbèi |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

The data show that there are very subtle meaning differences between synonymous pairs or sets of lexemes. If two or more lexemes have the same propositional meaning they may differ in their expressive, social or evoked meaning. It is difficult to find lexemes which share all the components of meaning. Jackson and Zé Amvela (2007) report that, even though the following sets of words: *beg*, *entreat*, *implore* and *beseech* all indicate “making an appeal”, there are subtle differences between them. The differences can be explained in terms of the different components of meaning inherent in each lexeme and the ones that are shared and the ones that are not. Apparently, they have the same propositional meaning but differ in all other aspects.

## 1.2 Ìgbuzò-Igbo and its Speakers

Ìgbuzò is a variety of the Igbo language spoken in Ìgbuzò town, (anglicized Ibusa) in Oshimili North Local Government Area of Delta State referred to by the natives as the Anioma area of Delta State. It belongs to the Enuàń cluster. Anioma is an acronym, which politically refers to the Igbo-speaking area of Delta State, comprising Aniocha, Ika, Ndokwa and Oshimili Local Government Areas. The variety of Igbo spoken in this area has three distinct clusters namely, Enuàń, Ìka and Ùkwuàń. Enuàń is the name used to refer to the cluster of the varieties spoken in the present day Aniocha and Oshimili Local Government Areas.

The Ìgbuzò speech variety is spoken by a population of not less than 500,000 people in an area covering about twenty-five square kilometres. It is also spoken as a second language by a large number of non-Igbuzo speaking people living in the Igbuzo clan. The town is surrounded by other Igbo-speaking communities. By virtue of education, marriage and language contact, most Igbuzo speakers are bilingual or multilingual. Traditionally, Igbuzo people are mostly farmers and traders.

As a lect of the Igbo language, Igbuzo shares some features with other Igbo varieties but differs in some other respects. The syllable in Igbuzo is the tone bearing unit. There are three syllable types and they are of the forms: CV, V, or N. Igbuzo, like many other dialects, has eight phonemic vowels, /i, ɪ, e, a, o, ɔ, u, ʊ/. It operates a vowel harmony system. The vowels can be divided into two sets of /i e o u/ and /a ɪ ɔ ʊ/, but the vowel /a/ sometimes violates the harmony rule as shown in the examples below:

6. àfè ‘dress’    alù ‘sponge’    àshĩ ‘a type of food’    àpe ‘neatness’  
           àkpo ‘palate’    agbè ‘calabash’    àdù ‘bitter kola’    akpe ‘soap dish’

Igbuzo has a ninth vowel [ɛ], which is non-distinctive. It usually occurs word finally, as in [òlòmɛ] ‘orange’; [ògbòmɛ] ‘wizard’; [wètɛ] ‘bring’; [mekɛ] ‘done well’; [ezenɛ] ‘polygamy’; [ɪnemɛ] ‘wives’. Various views have been expressed by linguists about the status of [ɛ] in Igbo. Studies have shown that it is distinctive in some dialects but not in others. Williamson (1967) shows that [e] and [ɛ] are allophones of the neutral /e/. A study by Monye (1989), reveals that [ɛ] is distinctive in Enuani Igbo. Although the variety of Enuani used for the study by Monye exhibits a nine vowel system, [ɛ] in Igbuzo (which is within the Enuani cluster) is not distinctive. Igbuzo shares some broad consonant features with some other Igbo dialects. It has a twenty-four distinctive consonant system. Unlike in some dialects, aspiration and nasalization are not distinctive in Igbuzo. The consonants are [b, ch, d, f, g, gb, gw, h, j, k, kp, kw, l, m, n, nw, ny, p, s, sh, t, w, y, z]. Igbuzo like Igbo is a tone language, with two level tones- high and low, and downstep.

## 2. Methodology

The data for this study are based on the Igbuzo variety of Igbo. The synonyms are sourced from interviews with competent Igbuzo speakers who are fifty years and above, and who have not stayed outside Igbuzo for more than a period of one year. The researcher also interviewed both young and older native Igbuzo speakers who live both in and outside Igbuzo. About one hundred synonymous sets/pairs were collected for the study. The English glosses for the synonyms are arranged alphabetically for ease of reference. The data are analysed using English and Igbuzo simple sentence frames to test substitutability or otherwise of the synonyms. The data are also represented orthographically. All high tones are left unmarked in this paper, but low tones and downsteps are marked in line with current orthographic practice in Igbo. In this paper too, we have used the single question mark [?] to indicate semantically odd or anomalous utterances, that is utterances that deviate from expected meaning.

## 3. Synonymy in Igbuzo-Igbo

Igbuzo is very rich in synonyms. Synonyms are realized as content words in most languages of the world, but a majority of Igbuzo synonyms are mainly nouns and verbs. Both partial and absolute synonyms have been identified in Igbuzo. A few examples are shown in the table below.

**Table 2:** *Some synonyms in Igbuzo*

| <i>S/N</i> | <i>Synonyms</i> | <i>Gloss</i> | <i>Igbuzo Sentences</i>              | <i>English Equivalent</i> |
|------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 7.         | òbàlà<br>nìmēe  | ‘blood’      | Ọ nà-àgba òbàlà.<br>Ọ nà-àgba nìmēe. | It is bleeding.           |
| 8.         | i-gō            | ‘to buy’     | Ànyị gòtá azù.                       | We bought                 |

|     |                                   |                         |                                                                              |                                 |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|     | ì zū<br>ì-kpō<br>ì-gbā<br>ì-wūtā  |                         | Ànyị zùtā ògìlì.<br>Ànyị kpòtā akwà.<br>Ànyị gbàtā mmanụ.<br>Ànyị wùtā nchà. | fish/melon/oil/cloth/soap.      |
| 9.  | mbùbò<br>agbè                     | ‘calabash’              | Mbùbò a àdàgaa.<br>Agbè à àdàgaa.                                            | This calabash has fallen.       |
| 10. | emume<br>omelifè                  | ‘celebration/<br>feast’ | Ndi Ìgbuzò nà-ème<br>emume.<br>Ndi Ìgbuzò nà-ème<br>omelifè.                 | Ìgbuzò are celebrating.         |
| 12. | di ntā<br>ègbèni                  | ‘hunter’                | Ìnna m ukwu bù<br>dintā.<br>Ìnna m ukwu bù<br>ègbèni.                        | My grand-father was a hunter.   |
| 13. | mgbà<br>òyị<br>nụnọ               | ‘lover’                 | Awele bù mgbà a.<br>Awele bù òyị a.<br>Awele bù nụnọ a.                      | Awele is her/his lover          |
| 14. | diòchì<br>òte nkwù                | ‘palm-wine<br>tapper’   | Diòchì nọ n’enū.<br>Òte nkwù nọ n’enū.                                       | The palm-wine tapper is up.     |
| 15. | òkaà<br>nchà                      | ‘soap’                  | Ọ wùta ọkaà n’ashịa.<br>Ọ wùta nchà n’ashịa.                                 | She bought soap from the market |
| 16. | ochō<br>ochē                      | ‘chair’                 | Ònye gòtè oche à?<br>Ònye gòtè ocho à?                                       | Who bought this chair?          |
| 17. | amuzù<br>dikē ukwu                | ‘convulsion’            | Amuzù nwù ònwà<br>ụù.<br>Dike ukwu nwù<br>ònwà ụù.                           | That child convulsed.           |
| 18. | òdọ nwịnwị<br>òsè -<br>kwunịkwunị | ‘epilepsy’              | Ọ na àlịa òdọ<br>nwịnwị.<br>Ọ na àlịa òsè<br>kwunịkwunị.                     | He suffers epileptic attacks.   |



|     |                               |                         |                                                                                           |                                                             |
|-----|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 19. | ògbuebùnù<br>dibìà            | ‘traditional<br>doctor’ | Nnà m bù<br>ògbuebùnù ukwu.<br>Nnà m bù dibìà<br>ukwu.                                    | My father is a doctor.                                      |
| 20. | ojìnè<br>diokē<br>onye-iwe    | ‘enemy’                 | Agāfe m̀ ojìnè m<br>n’ìlo.<br>Agāfe m̀ diokē m<br>n’ìlo.<br>Agāfe m̀ onye iwe m<br>n’ìlo. | I passed by my enemy<br>outside                             |
| 21. | nye ògù<br>kpà nnwa<br>chì    | ‘placenta’              | Onye ògù à bù ibù<br>shiinnē.<br>Àkpà nnwa à bù ibù<br>shiinnē.<br>Ichì à bù ibù shiinnē. | This placenta is very big.                                  |
| 22. | òpì<br>àkpelè                 | ‘flute’                 | Nwadìshì mà ègbu<br>òpì..<br>Nwadìshì mà ègbu<br>àkpelè.                                  | Nwadìshì plays the flute<br>well.                           |
| 23. | i-gwū<br>i-hō<br>i-kē<br>ì-bù | ‘to harvest’            | Wa nà-ègwu akpū.<br>Wa nà-èho elō.<br>Wa nà-èke okwùlù.<br>Wa nà-àbù àkàsì.               | We are harvesting some<br>cassava/mushroom/okra/co<br>coyam |

From the data above, we notice that the number of lexemes within a synonymous set varies extensively. Some sets have two items, others three, four, or even, seven and more items. Examples abound in the table to show that synonyms are products of dialectal variation, language change over time, style and attitude of speakers.

### 3.1 Absolute and Partial Synonyms in Ìgbuzò-Ìgbò

When people talk about synonymy, what readily comes to mind is partial or loose synonymy. This is so because absolute synonymy is rare in natural languages. Linguists believe that it is unlikely for two words to be used in different contexts and still retain the

same stylistic, connotative, expressive or social meaning. In isolation, two lexemes may mean the same thing but cannot be used in the same linguistic or situational contexts, that is, they may have similar meaning in one context but not in all contexts. For example, the synonyms *hide/conceal*, *strong/powerful*, *deep/profound* cannot be used in all contexts to mean the same thing. There are many occasions when one lexeme is appropriate in one context but odd in another. In Section 1.1, we noted that the substitutability of lexemes is responsible for the distinction between partial and absolute synonyms. If a lexeme can be substituted for another in all contexts then, the set of lexemes are absolute synonyms. In *Igbuzò*, as in other natural languages, absolute synonyms are rare, but loose/partial synonyms abound. We consider the following pairs of loose synonyms and their different contexts as illustrations: *mmilī /iyī* ‘stream’; *ugbùgbà/ìtè* ‘pot’; *-tè aka/-tè òtètè* ‘be far’; *ashīmā/akàlà* ‘mark’/ ‘sign’.

- |                                                                    |                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 24a) Ànyi nà-àsụ akwà na mmilī .<br>We wash clothes in the stream. | 25a) Uzò beē Ngozi tè aka.<br>The road to Ngozi’s house is far.                                        |
| b) Ànyi nà-àsụ akwà na iyī .<br>We wash clothes in the stream.     | b) Uzò beē Ngozi tè òtètè.<br>The road to Ngozi’s house is far.                                        |
| c) Nye m̄ mmilī laa.<br>Give me water to drink.                    | c) O tèga akā mmụ nà Ngozi fụ<br>It’s a long time I saw Ngozi.                                         |
| d) ?Nye m̄ iyī laa.                                                | d) ?O tèga òtètè mmụ nà Ngozi fụ.                                                                      |
| 26a) Ugbùgbà ofē sili n’ọkụ.<br>The pot of soup is on the fire.    | 27a) O nwe ashīmā dị a n’ụkwụ.<br>He/she has a mark/scar on his/her leg                                |
| b) Ìtè ofē sili n’ọkụ.<br>The pot of soup is on the fire.          | b) O nwe akala di a n’ụkwụ<br>He/she has a mark/scar on his/her leg                                    |
| c) Bunye m̄ ìtè mmilī uù.<br>Bring me the pot of water.            | c) Oke mmilī zò ònyaa abūhọ ezigbo ashīmā<br>The mighty rain that fell yesterday is not a good signal. |
| d) ?Bunye m̄ ugbùgbà mmilī uù.                                     | d) ? Oke mmil zò ònyaa abūhọ ezigbo akàlà                                                              |

In all the (a) and (b) examples above, the lexemes are interchangeable because they share the same propositional/denotative meanings that are not in (c) and (d). Examples (24d), (25d), (26d) and (27d) are semantically anomalous. The synonyms, *iyī* and *mmilī*, (in example 24), in one context, mean ‘water’ and differ in another context. This variation explains for the semantic anomaly in (24d), since *iyī* in this sentence refers to the flowing *stream/river* not *water*. It is not proper to say: ‘give me the river/stream to drink’. When *iyī* and *mmilī* have the same propositional meaning of ‘water’, they can be used interchangeably as in (24a and b). Similarly, *ugbùgbà* is semantically specified as [+pot], [+soup] and [-water], and *ìtè* specified as [+pot], [-soup] and [+water]. While (26a) and (b) are semantically appropriate, (26d) is not. *Ugbùgbà* is reserved for soup. This also

explains for the semantic anomaly of (25d and 27d). A few absolute synonyms have also been attested in Igbuzò. The pair of lexemes given below can be used interchangeably in all contexts:

**Table 3:** *Absolute synonyms in Igbuzò*

| S/N | Absolute synonyms                     | Meaning                |
|-----|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 28. | m̀madù nīne/onye ọ̀bùnà/m̀madù n̄cha  | ‘everybody’/‘everyone’ |
| 29. | ìbùà/ m̀bò                            | ‘two’                  |
| 30. | -te ude/ -kpe ude                     | ‘rob cream’            |
| 31. | -bù abù/ -kwe ukwe                    | ‘sing’                 |
| 32. | ulù/èlèlè                             | ‘profit’               |
| 33. | isi ikē/ekwē ekwe                     | ‘stubbornness’         |
| 34. | ọ̀sịsọ ọ̀sịsọ/ngwa ngwā/òzìgbo òzìgbo | ‘quickly’              |
| 35. | eshi ọ̀shjā/ atụ                      | ‘buffalo’              |

### 3.2 Sources of synonyms in Ìgbuzò

Some linguists have rightly argued that it is uneconomical for absolute synonyms to exist in a language. This is because there is no real need for two words expressing the same idea to exist in the same language. However, it has been observed that partial synonyms are found in languages owing to some natural factors such as, dialectal variation, language contact, collocational possibilities, attitudes and styles of speakers, derivation, and presence of idioms, ideophones or euphemisms, among others. So synonyms in a language may belong to different dialects. They may portray positive or negative attitudes of speakers. They could also belong to different registers. These factors have accounted for the presence of synonyms in most languages and have also explained for the sources and distribution of synonyms along different parameters. In this section therefore we examine some of these sources that have accounted for loose synonyms in Igbuzò.

#### 3.2.1 Language contact and dialect variation in Ìgbuzò synonymy

Speakers of Ìgbuzò are constantly interacting with other Igbo speakers and those of other different languages. Igbuzò has made contact with languages like Yoruba, Hausa, Isoko, Urhobo, Edo, English and other dialects of Igbo. Through contact with these languages and dialects extensive borrowing has taken place and many new words have entered the lexicon and have formed synonyms with the indigenous Igbuzò words. Many synonyms in Igbuzò are formed from borrowing from other dialects of Igbo and some Nigerian languages as shown in the table below:

**Table 4:** Borrowed words and synonyms in Igbuzò

| S/N | Donor Language      | Donor Lexemes   | Native Igbuzo Lexemes | Igbuzo synonyms                 | English Gloss                       |
|-----|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 36. | Yoruba              | agbo<br>“ram”   | onye nzuzù, òzùàì     | àgbò, onye nzuzu,<br>òzùàì      | ‘fool’                              |
|     |                     | agbado          | òkà                   | ògbàdu, òkà                     | ‘corn’                              |
|     |                     | ewa             | àgwà / biìnsì         | àgwà, biìnsì                    | ‘beans’                             |
|     |                     | elubo           | nni òsìsè             | nni òsìsè, àlìbọ                | ‘flour’                             |
|     |                     | egusi           | iheèlè, ògìlì         | ògwushi, iheèlè,<br>ògìlì       | ‘melon’                             |
|     |                     | okwuta          | m̀bùlù ùkpòlò         | òkwutē, m̀bùlù,<br>ùkpòlò       | ‘stone’                             |
| 37. | English             | pussy cat       | onogbò                | b̀usù/p̀usù,<br>onogbò          | ‘pussy cat’                         |
|     |                     | beans           | -                     | biìnsì, àgwà                    | ‘beans’                             |
|     |                     | onions          | -                     | onyònsì, yàbaàsì                | ‘onions’                            |
|     |                     | dirty           | inyi                  | dòtì, inyi                      | ‘dirty’                             |
| 38. | Other Igbo dialects | mgbìlìgba àtanù | ikpo                  | mgbiligba, àtanù,<br>ikpo       | ‘bell’                              |
|     |                     | òbàlà           | m̀meē                 | òbàlà, m̀meē                    | ‘blood’                             |
|     |                     | agū             | àwòlò                 | agū, àwòlò                      | ‘lion’                              |
|     |                     | ìkpā àgwà       | imē èmùme             | ìkpā àgwà, imē<br>èmùme         | ‘to behave’                         |
|     |                     | nchà            | òkaà                  | nchà, òkaà                      | ‘soap’                              |
|     |                     | akụ oyìbo       | m̀kpù                 | m̀kpù, akụ oyìbo                | ‘coconut’                           |
|     |                     | edè             | àkàsì                 | edè, àkàsì                      | cocoyam                             |
| 39. | Isoko               | òpìà            | mmà                   | òpìà, mmà                       | ‘cutlass’                           |
| 40. | Hausa               | albasa          | -                     | onyònsì, yabaasi                | ‘onions’                            |
|     |                     | wanke           | àgwà,                 | wanke, àgwà                     | ‘beans’                             |
|     |                     | manjida         | -                     | m̀manù àpàpà;<br>m̀manu manjida | ‘ground nut oil’<br>‘vegetable oil’ |

It is evident from the table that Igbuzo has acquired some loan words from the Yoruba language. The word àgbò in Yoruba which means ‘ram’ is metaphorically used in Igbuzò to mean ‘foolishness’ or ‘stupidity’. Some of the borrowed words have been nativized into the Igbuzò sound system, for example, p̀usù/b̀usù from ‘pussy cat’; ògwusi from egusi; ògbàdu from agbado and biìnsì from ‘beans’; dòtì from ‘dirty’ and many others.

### 3.2.2 Collocational Possibilities and Synonymy in Ìgbuzò

Collocation is a term used in lexicology to refer to the habitual co-occurrence of individual lexical items. In natural languages, it is observed that certain lexical items go with some items, while they do not go with others. This natural phenomenon of verb-noun collocational or selectional restrictions accounts for the existence of synonymy in Igbuzò. This is a situation where verbs share propositional meaning and vary in other aspects depending on the nouns that can co-occur with them. Lexical items that have been identified as synonyms exhibit varying degrees of selectional restrictions. Thus, the word “blond” will co-occur with “hair” not with “dress”, and “hammer” with “nail” and not “book”. In Igbuzo the verb *-chì* will collocate with “spoons” or any [+plural], [+light], [+count noun], and *-bu* with [heavy] objects, whether mass or count noun.

The collocational or selectional restriction rules in Ìgbuzò- Igbo allow some items to co-occur and forbid others. They provide the semantic environment for the possible co-occurrence of the lexical items. The physical nature of the nouns contributes to verb/noun compatibility. This phenomenon of verb-noun co-occurrence in Igbuzo allows verbs to obligatorily select their accompanying nouns. The verbs *-gbu*, *-kù*, *-ya* *-gbò* are all synonyms of “plant”, but the noun that accompanies each verb is different. The verbs select their appropriate nouns. Below are the verbs and their accompanying nouns as well as the semantic feature specifications for the nouns in object position (given in square brackets).

- 41a) - **gbu**    *ji*, ‘yam’; *àkàsì* ‘cocoyam’; *akpu* ‘cassava’  
                   [+ plantable] [+tuber crops] [+effort]
- b) - **gbò**    *ògèdè* ‘plantain’; *òlòme* ‘orange’; *ònugbù* ‘bitter leaves’; *osè* ‘pepper’  
                   *ùtazìzì*, ‘a type of vegetable’; *fùlawà* “flower”  
                   [+plantable] [+transplant] [+ suckers] [care]
- c) - **kù**    *ọkà* ‘corn’; *ògìlì* ‘melon’; *mkpùlù* *osisi* ‘seed’; *mbùbò* ‘calabash’;  
                   *ugū* ‘pumpkin leaf’; *ọkwùlù* ‘okra’  
                   [+plantable] [+seed] [-difficulty]
- d) - **ya**    *ose* ‘pepper’; *ọkà* ‘corn’  
                   [+plantable] [+spread/scatter] [+seed/grain]

The semantic feature specification describes the physical nature of the nouns and so, the selectional restriction rules in the dialect prevent inappropriate co-occurrence, such as in example (42) below:

- 42a) ?Ànyị àgbòga jì/akpụ/àkàsì.  
 b) ?Ànyị àkùga jì/akpụ/àkàsì.  
 c) ?Ànyị ègbuga osè/ òkwùlù/fùlawà

The anomaly of the constructions is caused by the non-compatibility of the verbs and nouns in the dialect. When the item to be planted (or the object of the verb) is not specified as shown in these sentences: Ànyị àgbòga ā, “We have planted **it**”, Ànyị àkùga ā, “We have planted **it**”, Ànyị ègbugē ē, We have planted **it**, then the synonyms *-gbò*, *-kù* and *-gbu* can be used interchangeably. Another example from the ‘wash’ cluster will make it clearer. The following are the Igbuzò synonyms for ‘wash’: *-cha*, *-fò*, *-hò*, *-kwò*, *-shò* *-sù* and *-wù*.

- 43a) **-cha** afele ‘plate’; itè ‘pot’; ùgèlè ‘knife’; ochē ‘chair’; àkpà ‘bag’; ànì ‘floor’;  
 ụnò ‘house’  
 [+washable] [-clothing] [+instrument] [-animate]
- b) **-fò** agịlì isī ‘hair’ (fixed collocation)  
 [+washable] [+human] [+hair]
- c) **-hò** akwù ‘palm kernel’; ònugbù bitter leaf’; òkpòlògwù ‘herb’  
 [+washable] [+squeezable] [-animate]
- d) **-kwò** aka ‘hand’ (fixed collocation)  
 [+washable] [+co-operation]
- e) **-shò** ishu ‘face’ (fixed collocation)  
 [+washable] [+face] [+hand as instrument]
- f) **-sù** akwà ‘clothes’; mpe ‘loin cloth’; ìchàfò  
 [+washable] [+clothing] [+fabric] [+two hands]
- g) **-wù** àhụ ‘body’ (fixed collocation)  
 [+washable] [+animate] [+/- instrument]

The semantic feature specification for the nouns explains the variation among the verbs. While *-sù*, for example, selects items of clothing for washing, *-cha* selects other items. The examples in (42 and 43) reveal that synonyms are contextually restricted. Other examples of selectional restrictions are seen in Table 2 in the verb clusters of “buy”, “harvest”, and “hold”, and many others in the dialect. For more examples also see Oweleke (1995) for analysis of fifteen different clusters of Igbuzò verbs and their selectional restrictions.



### 3.2.3 Euphemism and Synonymy in Igbuzò

Euphemism and idiomatic expressions also account for the presence of synonymy in Igbuzò Igbo. Euphemism is a phenomenon used in writing or speech to avoid distasteful, embarrassing or unpleasant words and utterances. Since euphemism allows a speaker to replace words with more pleasant ones, it has helped to create words having sameness of meaning. Euphemisms are often motivated by taboo. Taboo words are linguistic units that are avoided or forbidden in a society. Every culture has its own forbidden expressions which are not normally referred to because of decency, respect, or fear. Some subjects like sexually explicit utterances, unpleasant words referring to excretory functions, or certain parts of the human body, especially the genitals, are seen as taboo in many languages. To avoid them, more pleasant words/utterances are used instead. A few examples in Igbuzò are given below:

**Table 5:** *Euphemism and synonymy in Igbuzò*

| S/N | Unpleasant/<br>Taboo words | Gloss           | Euphemistic<br>expressions | Literal meaning                        | Igbuzò synonyms            |
|-----|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 44. | agwọ                       | ‘snake’         | elili                      | ‘rope’                                 | agwọ, elili                |
| 45. | ̀̀nsị                      | ‘feaces’        | nwa ̀̀mmili<br>ukwu        | ‘big urine’                            | nwa ̀̀mmili ukwu,<br>̀̀nsị |
| 46. | òwèlè                      | ‘toilet’        | àzụ ụnò                    | ‘back of the<br>house’                 | òwèlè, àzụ ụnò             |
| 47. | -la                        | ‘copulate’      | dinè,<br>nwe mmekọ         | ‘sleep with’<br>‘have<br>relationship’ | la, dinè, nwe<br>mmekọ     |
| 48. | -nwụ                       | ‘die’           | na ụnò                     | ‘go home’                              | nwụ, na ụnò                |
| 50. | ọshụ/ọhụ                   | ‘vagina’        | ụkwụ ihū                   | ‘front leg’                            | ọshụ/ọhụ, ụkwụ<br>ihū      |
| 51. | nyụ nsị                    | ‘defecate’      | je āzụ ụnò                 | ‘go to the back of<br>the house’       | nyụ nsị, je āzụ ụnò        |
| 52. | ila di                     | commit adultery | ijē ilo                    | ‘to go outside’                        | ila di, ijē ilo            |

The word agwọ “snake” instills fear in people, so Igbuzò speakers would rather use elili “rope” to represent or replace the more distasteful or fearful word especially at night. It is interesting to note that in order to avoid the sexually explicit expression -la “have sexual intercourse”, two other less embarrassing words, dinè “sleep or lie with” and nwe mmekọ “have a relationship with” are used, instead. The avoidance of taboo words and utterances has become a very good source of synonymy in Igbuzò-Igbo.

### 3. Diachronic aspect of Igbuzò synonymy

A historical analysis of Igbuzò-Igbo shows that many synonyms arise as a result of language change over time. Igbuzò lexicon contains both the speech forms of the old and

younger generations, as well as borrowed words from other dialects. These forms have existed over a period of time, long enough to cause change. It is observed that synonyms exist in a language when different speech forms from different dialects (social, regional or temporal) co-exist within a particular time in its development. Palmer (1981) and Denham and Lobeck (2010) report that, English is particularly rich in, and has synonyms more than most languages, for the historical reason that its vocabulary has come from different sources in Anglo-Saxon, French, Latin and Greek. So, in the English language there are pairs of synonyms from both original native English and from the borrowed languages.

Dialect variation may be social, regional or temporal. When temporal, variants are created by the presence of the speech forms of different age groups within a community, or words used at different periods in the history of the language. When these situations occur, synonyms emerge in the language. The forms that have emerged would co-exist with the same meaning for a time before any change takes place. The observation is that some of these sets may exist as synonyms for a particular period then, later change their meaning (that is, extend or narrow their meaning) or worse still, have the meaning disappear completely from the lexicon. Jackson and Zé Amvela (2007) report that the word “sky” was borrowed from Norse into English and came into competition with the native English word “heaven”: so the two words were in the lexicon at a particular period and were used interchangeably. In due course, ‘sky’ came to denote just the physical and ‘heaven’ the spiritual. A semantic change has taken place. In Igbo also, many words used by the older generation of speakers are still in use alongside the speech forms of the younger people or the forms borrowed from other dialects and languages. Some of the synonym pairs of words created still retain the same meaning, while others have changed their meanings. The word, *ọkaà* ‘soap’ now has a restricted meaning of native black soap, while *nchà* now denotes all kinds of soap. Similarly, the word, *nụnụ* which referred to one’s buddy, one who befriends and cares for another (without sexual attachment) is now used to refer to one’s lover. In the past or traditionally, *nụnụ* did not suggest sexual intimacy. Some words also have become obsolete or have completely disappeared from the lexicon. Below are some synonym pairs caused by temporal variation in the dialect.

**Table 6: Speech forms of younger and older generations**

| <i>s/n</i> | <i>Speech forms of younger generation</i> | <i>Speech forms of elders</i> | <i>English Equivalent</i> | <i>s/n</i> | <i>Speech forms of younger generation</i> | <i>Speech forms of elders</i> | <i>English Equivalent</i> |
|------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 53.        | <i>nchà</i>                               | <i>ọkaà</i>                   | ‘soap’                    | 63.        | <i>òpì</i>                                | <i>àkpelè</i>                 | ‘flute’                   |
| 54.        | <i>ochē</i>                               | <i>ocho</i>                   | ‘chair’                   | 64.        | <i>ògwusi</i>                             | <i>ìheèlè</i>                 | ‘melon’                   |

|     |           |         |            |     |           |                |                    |
|-----|-----------|---------|------------|-----|-----------|----------------|--------------------|
| 55. | akụ oyibo | mkpu    | ‘coconut’  | 65. | idī ọcha  | idī onwène àpe | ‘to be neat’       |
| 56. | agbè      | mbùbò   | ‘calabash’ | 66. | òte nkwu  | diòchì         | ‘palm wine tapper’ |
| 57. | dintā     | ègbèni  | ‘hunter’   | 67. | onwē ego  | òdàshì         | ‘rich person’      |
| 58. | ugbō      | ògò     | ‘farm’     | 68. | òkwutē    | m̀b̀l̀l̀       | ‘stone’, ‘missls’  |
| 59. | ọyị       | nụnọ    | ‘lover’    | 69. | gba nkịtị | da àshì        | ‘keep quiet’       |
| 60. | òbàlà     | m̀m̀eē  | ‘blood’    | 70. | dibịà     | ogbu ebunu     | ‘doctor’           |
| 61. | ukwu      | elegede | ‘bigness’  | 71. | nnụà      | ewòì           | ‘welcome’          |
| 62. | afọ ọma   | ètòse   | ‘kindness’ | 72. | mgbịlịgba | ìkpo           | ‘bell’             |

The data in the Table 6 show that quite a good number of Igbuzo words still retain their original forms. Most Igbuzo speakers consulted in the course of this study feel that these words, among others, are indigenous Igbuzo words: *m̀m̀eē* ‘blood’, *ègbèni* ‘hunter’, *ògò* ‘farm’, *mkpù* ‘coconut’, *òdàshì* ‘wealthy person’ and *ntụ* ‘lie’. When asked why they think so, they give examples of proverbs, idioms and ritual-based phraseological utterances commonly made by competent Ìgbuzò speakers. We give a few examples below:

73. Ọ nà-àcha **m̀m̀eē m̀m̀eē**. “It is reddish”.  
?Ọ nà-àcha òbàlà òbàlà.
74. Ọ gà-àha nha **m̀m̀eē**. “It requires a blood sacrifice”.  
?Ọ gà-àha nha òbàlà
75. Ndị òtu **ègbèni** Ìgbuzò “Igbuzo hunter’s group”  
?Ndị di nta Igbuzò
76. Ànyị nọ n’ụnọ **ògò**. “We are at the farm house”.  
?Ànyị nọ n’ụnọ ugbō.

- 
- |     |                                           |                         |
|-----|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 77. | Uko <b>mkpù</b><br>?uko akụ oyìbo         | “cup made from coconut” |
| 78. | Òdàshì dì n'Ìgbuzò<br>?Onwego dì n'Ìgbuzò | “wealthy man of Igbuzò” |
| 79. | Òka ntụ<br>? òka asị                      | “chief/great liar”      |

The use of these words more than their synonymous pairs suggests that they are indigenous to the Igbuzò variety. These words, in the illustration above: akụ oyìbo, ‘coconut’, ugbō ‘farm’, dinta ‘hunter’ and òbàlà ‘blood’ are not native Igbuzò words. The word *onwēgo* is a derived word.

#### 4. Conclusion

The paper examined the lexical relation of synonymy in the Igbuzò dialect, a variety of the Igbo language. It studied the types, sources and contexts of use of synonyms and reveals four significant and important findings. First, there are subtle and interesting semantic nuances among different sets of synonyms. Second, dialectal variations are major sources of synonymy and many indigenous Ìgbuzò words form synonyms with their borrowed counterparts. Third, a semantic variation in the speech forms of both the older and younger generation of speakers establishes that synonymy in Igbuzò is diachronically relevant. Fourth, partial synonyms are more common than absolute synonyms, that is, synonyms are not substitutable in all contexts. The paper supports other findings in the literature that synonymy is a significant linguistic phenomenon that a competent speaker of Igbuzò uses to avoid monotony in speech. No linguistic documentation has been done on this aspect of Ìgbuzò variety, and the implication is that these indigenous forms are under the threat of extinction. The paper notes also that, in addition to the few number of Igbo dictionaries, no thesaurus exists for the Igbo language. It is believed that this work may become an inspiration for the production of an Igbo dictionary of synonyms.

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## **49. Semantics and Tone in Esan Lexical Formation**

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Most previous studies on the interface of meaning and tone in Esan lexical formations have not gone beyond the observation that, a change in tonal configurations results in a change in meaning, without a change in segmental constitution. This paper is a micro-semantic study with the main aim of identifying changes in tonal configurations which occur simultaneously with semantic and segmental changes in lexical formations. Sources of data for this work were secondary, mostly from earlier auto-segmental studies on Esan tonal system. Tone in Esan has semantic implications for some non-derived and derived lexical formations. Specifically, the non-derived lexical formations of nouns, second and third dimensions of demonstratives and numerals bear combination configurations of H and L tones, while verbs, adjunctives, personal pronouns and first dimension of demonstratives bear L tones in citation. Derived lexical formations of nominals and adjunctives change tonal configurations with a change in lexical unit. These findings highlight the incisiveness of the tonal phenomena as inalienable identity of tone languages like Esan. The inherent distinguishing features between related languages of a linguistic group could be found in a semantic study of tonal configurations in such languages. This study provides an avenue for the documentation of aspects of Esan. As a micro-semantic study, it is a contribution to the less-studied semantic component of the bicomponential structure of language.

### **1. Introduction**

The submission that semantics - the study of meaning – is the complement of symbolics – the study of form in linguistics study, conforms with the description of language – the object of linguistic study, as comprising meaning and form. Ferdinand de Saussure (1916) is credited with being one of the foremost linguists to express this characteristic of language when he said that language is both meaningful form and the meaning itself expressed with the meaningful form, not just the meaningful form itself. This position has since then been further articulated by Chafe (1975) and Uwajeh (2008).

Chafe (1975) states that semantic structure is the crucial component of language whose knowledge is invaluable for any adequate description of the post semantic processes which produce well formed utterances. For that reason, he opines that an adequate theory of language needs to be semantically based. In his performative linguistics theory which postulates that the nature of language involves much more than the structure of language. Uwajeh (2008:4) states that:

Language content comprises both a thought (or meaning) component and a symbolization (or form) component, with nothing else in between or apart from



these two constituents as regards the language phenomenon. Syntax is not a third immediate constituent of language supposedly separate somehow from language meaning and language as has been posited in generative grammar for some fifty years now, but is in fact an aspect of language form – i.e. the aspect of language form concerning the organization or (structuring) of postlexical forms for linguistic communication.

This paper is a contribution to semantic study, the meaning sub part of linguistics study. It is delimited to Esan lexical formations and focuses on identifying changes in tonal configurations which may be due to semantic changes in these lexical formations. To state that tone is distinctive in Esan is superfluous and this is not the goal of this work. Rather, the primary aim of the present effort is to draw attention to the interface of meaning and a change in tonal configurations in Esan lexical units. The lexical formations under examination include the lexical units of noun, verb and adjunctives. It is hoped that the findings from this study would serve as a basis for further studies on the semantic implications of tonal interactions in post lexical formations in Esan and other Edoid languages.

### **1.1 Esan**

Esan is spoken by the Esans, who occupy a geographical region in Edo State commonly called Ishan. The language is the mother tongue in five Local Government Areas (LGA) of Edo State. These LGAs are Esan West, Esan Central, Esan North East, Esan South East and Igueben. The population of native speakers of the language is put at 587,858 (2006 National Population Census, Edo State National Population Commission). Esan is classified as a member of North Central Edoid (NCE), a language group which belongs to the New Benue Congo of the Niger Congo Phylum (Elugbe 1989). Esanland is located North East of Benin City.

The language has a proposed orthography (Okojie and Ejele 1989). It is taught as a subject in Primary and Junior secondary schools in Esanland and is used for the relay of local news and discussion programs on the State owned radio and television stations. Osiruemu (2010) identifies Esan as multidialectal by phonetic, phonological, segmental, tonological and micro grammatical comparative analysis.

### **1.2 Tone and meaning**

One major goal of Goldsmith's (1976) autosegmental phonology was adequate accountability for phenomena usually referred to in linguistic study as supra segmentals, one of which is that of tone. Rulon Wells (1945 cf. Goldsmith 1976) defines supra segments simply as denoting phonemes which are neither vowels nor consonants. Goldsmith argued that these phenomena could not be adequately accounted for by the structuralist theory before it. His thesis further showed that the behaviour of the so called supra segments, portrayed them as autonomous segments since their characteristics projected them as capable of maintaining an independent status and stability, even after the segments which supposedly bore them, had been elided or after the suprasegment had

been desegmentalised – an argument which buttressed his classifying them as autosegments (autonomous segments).

Tone, which is the main feature of interest in this work, is identified in general linguistic study as pitch phenomena, a prosodic feature along with others such as syllable and duration. Haugen (1949 cf. Goldsmith, 1976:6) describes tone as well as its other pitch counterparts of stress and duration, as prosodeme or prosodic phoneme, which modify the basic speech sound, i.e. segments (vowel and consonant sounds). That the phenomena of tone is described as a prosodic phoneme, is suggestive of the fact that it is functional, i.e. that it brings about a difference in meaning. This fact is encased in its description as pitch phenomenon that results in a change in meaning between lexical and post lexical forms of language. In that regard, Egbokhare (1994:67) states that:

Pitch is the perceptual correlate of frequency of vibration... the rate of vibration of the vocal cords per second. Pitch is continually changing in speech in accordance with the dynamics of voice production and this... gives speech its melodic pattern... In most African languages, pitch melody is best defined as a property of the word. Thus a change in speech melody may result in a change in meaning of a word. Speech melody, when it behaves in this way is called tone.

Like most Edoid languages, Esan is a tone language (Elugbe 1989, Ejele 1994, Osiruemu 2005, 2010). Welmers (1973:73ff) paints a general apathy for the study of tone by language researchers in the past. This apathy ranged from total avoidance, to apprehension arising from perceived complexities of the subject. It is hoped that this study would contribute to erasing this apathy towards the study of this inherent part of tone languages.

Previous studies on the interface of meaning and tone in Esan lexical formations have not gone beyond the observation that a change in tonal configuration of a word results simultaneously in a change in meaning of that word, without a change in its segmental constitution (see 1.4). The present study transcends this limit. In addition to this observation, this study draws attention to the changes in tonal configurations of non derived and derived Esan lexical formations, which tend to occur simultaneously with a change in their functions.

### **1.3 Data and methodology**

This study is based on the Ubiaza – Ugboha – Udo cluster of Esan speech varieties postulated as earlier forms of the language (Osiruemu, 2010). Data for this work were mostly secondary. The sources of data comprised previous works on Esan such as Okojie and Ejele (1987), Ejele (1994, 2003), Osiruemu (2005, 2010, 2011).

Present day semantic theories are tailor made to suit European and Indo European languages, a majority of which are not tone languages. These theories may therefore contain little or no provision for the interface of tone and meaning in tone languages and as such, may not be largely relevant to the goal in this work. However, since pitch phenomena occurs mostly simultaneously with the segmental, the relationship between

these two linguistic forms is that a change in their configurations is a reflection of semantic change of some sort.

This work embraces Chafe's (1975) meaning structure theory which he equates with the ideational, as far as it concerns the lexicon. By this theory, ideas are concepts which are real entities in people's mind. Through language, they are symbolized so that they may be transmitted from the mind of one individual to that of another. The realities or actual manifestations of these concepts, which may be particular or accidental, are mental entities called semantic units. These semantic units, which are further couched in the symbolic units of sounds, should not be equated with concepts.

Chafe states further that the elements of surface structure, which are observable, are only indirectly related to meaning such that, no concept can be attached to each such element. While sound and thus language form is accessible to observation in relatively straightforward ways and are preservable, concepts are located deep within the human nervous system. Thus the satisfactory observation of meaning is not feasible. Since concepts have their locus within our mind, that is the place to look for them. Although it has been asserted that the linguistic processes of the mind as such are quite unobservable, Chafe explains that language enables a speaker to call up concepts in the mind of a hearer which are identical with those in his mind. This is made easy because the sounds which travel from the former to the latter only activate concepts which both speaker and hearer have in common. In his words:

They may and often do introduce novel configurations of these familiar concepts – to that extent, the speaker is saying something new. But it is normally only the configurations which are new not the concepts which make them up (Chafe 1975:75).

Semantic units are said to be related to each other in a hierarchical fashion. The highest in the hierarchy are the all inclusive semantic units – verbs and nouns – followed by the selectional units which cover narrower arrears of conceptual space like state, process action. This is followed by the less inclusive units which are maximally specific and comprise no others. These are called lexical units such as sing, laugh, etc. The selectional units of a lexical unit distinguish it from others.

By the tenets of this theory, the total conceptual universe may be divided into two main areas – verbs, which embrace states and events, and nouns which embrace things (physical objects and reified abstractions). Of these two, the verb is assumed to be the central and the noun the peripheral. The argument is that in every language, a verb is present semantically in all but a few marginal utterances and although the verb is typically accompanied by one or more nouns, some sentences comprise only a verb. The nature of the verb also determines the nature of the rest of the sentence, what nouns would accompany it, what the relationship of these nouns to it would be and how the latter would be semantically specified. As an illustration, a verb specified as an action in the sentence:

The girl cried.

dictates that it is accompanied by a noun related to it as an agent, and that the noun be specified as animate and also human. Thus the verb dictates the character of the noun **girl**.

In this work, lexical units or formations are categorized as verbs and nouns. Others are verbal adjuncts or nominal adjuncts depending on their semantic roles as extensions of the meanings of a verb or a noun. The goal in this work is to identify changes in tonal configurations that occur simultaneously with semantic changes in Esan lexical units. Findings from this study may serve as insight into the meaning of various tonal configurations in future researches on the interface of semantics and tone in Esan.

#### 1.4 Previous relevant works

Pitch phenomena is really present in voiced segments only (Egbokhare 1994). Specifically, as with most Edoid languages, tone in Esan is born by the vowel segment. As a preamble to this study, we highlight the sound segments of Esan. Ejele (1994:69) identifies seven oral and five nasal vowels, while Osiruemu (2010) identifies 28 consonant sound for Esan, as follows.

##### 1.4.1 Esan vowels

| Place<br>Manner | FRONT/NASAL    | CENTRAL/NASAL  | BACK/NASAL     |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| HIGH            | i            ĭ |                | u            ũ |
| MID             | e              |                | o              |
| HALF MID        | ɛ            ẽ |                | ɔ            õ |
| LOW             |                | a            ǎ |                |

Figure I: *Vowel Chart of Esan*

| Place<br>manner | bilabial | labio-<br>dental | alveolar | velar | Labio-<br>velar | palatal | Palate-<br>alveolar | glottal |
|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|-------|-----------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
| plosive         | p   b    |                  | t   d    | k   g | kp   gb         |         |                     | h       |
| Fricative       | β        | f   v            | s   z    | x   ɣ |                 |         | ʃ   ʒ               |         |
| Affricate       |          |                  |          |       |                 |         | tʃ   dʒ             |         |
| Nasal           | m        |                  | n        |       | ɱ               |         | ɲ                   |         |
| Lateral         |          |                  | l        |       |                 |         |                     |         |
| Trill           |          |                  | r        |       |                 |         |                     |         |
| Glide           | w        |                  |          |       |                 | j       |                     |         |

Figure II: *Esan consonants*

### Esan tonal system

Ejele (1982) identifies the high [ ' ], mid [ - ], low [ ` ], rising [ ˇ ] and falling [ ^ ] at the systematic phonetic level. She states that the mid tone is an allotone of the low and observes that only the high and low tones distinguish between identical words. Osiruemu (2005) however states that this mid tone is in reality a **L** tone. According to her, “when this L tone occurs in sequence in a steady state as it does in Esan, it sounds like the mid tone.”

Table I: *Tonal contrasts in Esan*

|         |         |            |
|---------|---------|------------|
| (i)     | / éfè / | ‘rat’      |
| (ii).   | /èfè /  | ‘edge’     |
| (iii).  | /ékpà / | ‘vomit’    |
| (iv).   | /èkpà / | ‘punch’    |
| (v).    | /ǝkpá / | ‘one’      |
| (vi)    | /ǝkpà / | ‘cock’     |
| (vii).  | / áwà / | ‘dog’      |
| (viii). | /àwà/   | ‘taboo’    |
| (ix).   | / éní / | ‘elephant’ |
| (x).    | /èní/   | ‘there’    |

Ejele (2003) states that the rising and falling glides are derivations from phonological processes such as vowel elision. These gliding tones occur following the disyllabification of the first of two adjacent vowels bearing non identical tones. A falling glide is formed when the tones on the vowel sequence is HL while a rising glide is formed when the sequence is LH tones.

Table II: *Tonal glides in Esan*

|       |                 |   |              |
|-------|-----------------|---|--------------|
| (i)   | ǝkpá # ǝkpá     | → | ǝkpǝkpà      |
|       | ‘one’ ‘one’     |   | ‘one by one’ |
| (ii)  | /èvá # èvá/     | → | /è v ê v á/  |
|       | ‘two’ ‘two’     |   | ‘in twos’    |
| (iii) | /údò # údò/     | → | / ú d ũ d ò/ |
|       | ‘stone’ ‘stone’ |   | ‘all stones’ |
| (iv)  | /áwà # áwà/     |   | / á w ă w à/ |
|       | ‘dog’ ‘dog’     |   | ‘all dogs’   |

## 2. Semantics and Tone in Lexical formation

In this section, we present the results of our examination of changes in tonal patterning which occur simultaneously with semantic changes of lexical formations in Esan. Lexical

formations investigated were identified under the two groups of non derived lexical formations and derived lexical formations.

## 2.1 Meaning and tone in non-derived lexical formations in Esan

The non derived classes of lexical formations examined were those of nouns, verbs and adjunctives.

### 2.1.1 Esan Nouns

Nouns in Esan are mostly bisyllabic and trisyllabic. They cut across the animate, inanimate, concrete and abstract semantic fields. Bisyllabic nouns exhibit a VCV structure and exhibit four tonal combinations as follows: L, HL, LHL and HHL.

Table III: *Tonal patterns on bisyllabic nouns in Esan*

| <b>LL</b>  |         |               |
|------------|---------|---------------|
| (i)        | /àmè /  | ‘water’       |
| (ii)       | /òxù/   | ‘sky/up’      |
| (iii)      | /èkè /  | ‘sand’        |
| (iv)       | /ɔkpù / | ‘anus’        |
| <b>HL</b>  |         |               |
| (v)        | /únù /  | ‘mouth’       |
| (vi)       | /ɔkà /  | ‘maize’       |
| (vii)      | /ájɔ/   | ‘wine’        |
| (viii)     | /ámà /  | ‘a mark’      |
| <b>LHL</b> |         |               |
| (ix)       | /àbâ /  | ‘father’      |
| (x)        | /ìvjê/  | ‘coral beads’ |
| (xi)       | /òkpjà/ | ‘man’         |
| (xii)      | /ɔgɔ/   | ‘bottle’      |
| <b>HHL</b> |         |               |
| (xiii)     | /óxwô/  | ‘woman’       |
| (xiv)      | /íyô/   | ‘money’       |

Trisyllabic nouns in Esan exhibit a vcvcv structure and five tonal combinations occur in trisyllabic nouns as follows: HHL, HLL, LLL, LHL and HLHL.

Table IV: *Tonal patterns on trisyllabic nouns in Esan*

| <b>HHL</b> |          |           |
|------------|----------|-----------|
| (i)        | /ékélè/  | ‘belly’   |
| (ii)       | /óxóxɔ/  | ‘fowl’    |
| (iii)      | /úkpárù/ | ‘cap’     |
| (iv)       | /ísíxũ/  | ‘termite’ |



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| <b>HLL</b> |         |          |
|------------|---------|----------|
| (v)        | /árǎɛ/  | ‘blood’  |
| (vi)       | /ólìlì/ | ‘cold’   |
| (vii)      | /ádùdù/ | ‘shadow’ |
| (viii)     | /áβìlì/ | ‘oil’    |

| <b>LLL</b> |          |            |
|------------|----------|------------|
| (ix)       | /ìzàgwo/ | ‘duck’     |
| (x)        | /èràlè/  | ‘fire’     |
| (xi)       | /èdɔɔ/   | ‘mucous’   |
| (xii)      | /ìxùmù/  | ‘medicine’ |

| <b>LHL</b> |          |              |
|------------|----------|--------------|
| (xiii)     | /ònógbò/ | ‘cat’        |
| (xiv)      | /òkólò/  | ‘war’        |
| (xv)       | /àgógò/  | ‘bell’       |
| (xvii)     | /èmátò/  | ‘iron/metal’ |

| <b>HLHL</b> |          |             |
|-------------|----------|-------------|
| (xvii)      | /éminâ/  | ‘cow’       |
| (xviii)     | /ágbàno/ | ‘underwear’ |
| (xix)       | /óliyî/  | ‘confusion’ |
| (xx)        | /ihìɛ/   | ‘beans’     |

### 2.1. 2 Esan verbs

Verbs in Esan may be monosyllabic or bisyllabic and have the CV and CVCV structures respectively. Esan verbs bear an all L tone in citation.

Table V: *Tonal patterns on verbs in Esan*

| <b>L</b> |      |               |
|----------|------|---------------|
| (i)      | /nè/ | ‘to defecate’ |
| (ii)     | /dè/ | ‘to fall’     |
| (iii)    | /lè/ | ‘to eat’      |
| (iv)     | /sǎ/ | ‘to jump’     |

| <b>LL</b> |          |             |
|-----------|----------|-------------|
| (v)       | /hòhò/   | ‘to winnow’ |
| (vi)      | /hèhè/   | ‘to escort’ |
| (vii)     | /lwèyè/  | ‘to shake’  |
| (viii)    | /gbòn ò/ | ‘to sweep’  |

### 2.1.3 Esan Adjunctives

Adjunctives may be described as lexical units used to extend the meanings of other lexical units in post-lexical formations. These would include, adjectives, numerals and dietics.

Adjectives in Esan may be monosyllabic or bisyllabic with a CV or a CVCV structure, respectively. They bear an all L tone pattern in citation.

Table VI: *Tone pattern in adjunctives in Esan*

| <b>L</b>  |             |              |
|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| (i)       | / mù /      | ‘sharp’      |
| (ii)      | / dǝǎ /     | ‘red’        |
| (iii)     | / fwà /     | ‘white’      |
| (iv)      | / tǎ /      | ‘long/tall’  |
| <b>LL</b> |             |              |
| (v)       | / s ɔ̀nɔ̀ / | ‘irritating’ |
| (vi)      | / rǝlǎ /    | ‘bitter’     |
| (vii)     | / lèlè /    | ‘sweet’      |
| (viii)    | / èsì /     | ‘good’       |

Numerals in Esan are either bisyllabic or multisyllabic and may bear the VCV, VV, VCVCV, syllable structures. The basic cardinal numerals- numbers 1 to 12- (others are mostly descriptive) bear HL and LH (L) while the ordinal numerals (excluding the first) bear an all L tone pattern in citation.

Table VII: *Tonal patterns on basic cardinal numerals in Esan*

| <b>LH</b>  |           |          |
|------------|-----------|----------|
| (i)        | / ɔ̀kpá / | ‘one’    |
| (ii)       | / èvá /   | ‘two’    |
| (iii)      | / isé /   | ‘five’   |
| (iv)       | / igbé /  | ‘ten’    |
| <b>HL</b>  |           |          |
| (v)        | / éà /    | ‘three’  |
| (vi)       | / énè /   | ‘four’   |
| (vii)      | / éhǎ /   | ‘six’    |
| (viii)     | / úè /    | ‘twenty’ |
| (ix)       | / ɔ̀gbǎ / | ‘thirty’ |
| <b>LHL</b> |           |          |
| (x)        | / ihílo / | ‘seven’  |
| (xi)       | / èlélè / | ‘eight’  |
| (xii)      | / isìlì / | ‘nine’   |

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|        |           |            |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| (xiii) | /ùgból ɔ/ | ‘eleven’   |
| (xiv)  | /ìgbèà /  | ‘thirteen’ |

Table VIII: *Tonal patternss on ordinal numerals in Esan***HLL**

|     |             |         |
|-----|-------------|---------|
| (i) | /ó k à l ò/ | ‘first’ |
|-----|-------------|---------|

**LLL(L)**

|        |            |             |
|--------|------------|-------------|
| (ii)   | /ɔzèvà/    | ‘second’    |
| (iii)  | /ɔzèà/     | ‘third’     |
| (iv)   | /ɔzènè/    | ‘fourth’    |
| (v)    | /ɔzìsè/    | ‘fifth’     |
| (vi)   | /ɔzèhǎ/    | ‘sixth’     |
| (viii) | /ɔzìhlɔ/   | ‘seventh’   |
| (ix)   | /ɔzèlèlè/  | ‘eighth’    |
| (xii)  | /ɔzìgbè/   | ‘tenth’     |
| (xiii) | /ɔzùgbòlɔ/ | ‘eleventh’  |
| (xiv)  | /ɔzùè/     | ‘twentieth’ |
| (xv)   | /ɔzɔgbǎ/   | ‘thirtieth’ |

Deictics (lexical items which specify individual persons, things or ideas. Personal pronouns and the first dimension of demonstratives and place adverbs bear an all L tone pattern. The second dimension of place adverbs and demonstratives bear a LH, while the third bears a HLHL tonal pattern in citation.

Table IX: *Tonal patterns on Esan personal pronouns*

|       |       |              |      |       |              |
|-------|-------|--------------|------|-------|--------------|
| (i)   | /ìmè/ | ‘I/me’       | (iv) | /ìmà/ | ‘us/we’      |
| (ii)  | /ùwè/ | ‘you (sing)’ | (v)  | /ìḃà/ | ‘you (plur)’ |
| (iii) | /ɔlè/ | ‘he/she/it’  | (vi) | /èlè/ | ‘they/them’  |

Table X: *Tonal patterns on place adverbs and demonstratives in Esan**First dimension***LL**

|        |       |         |
|--------|-------|---------|
| (vii)  | /ɔnà/ | ‘this’  |
| (viii) | /ènà/ | ‘these’ |

*Second dimension***LHL**

|      |       |         |
|------|-------|---------|
| (ix) | /ɔnî/ | ‘that’  |
| (x)  | /ènî/ | ‘these’ |

*Third dimension***HLHL**

- (xi) /ɔnɔkɛ̀/ 'the other'  
 (xii) /énèkɛ̀/ 'the others'

**2.2 Meaning and tone in derived lexical formations in Esan**

The derived lexical units examined for tonal changes which occurred with change in meaning of lexical units were nominals and adjunctives or verbal nouns.

**2.2.1 Derived Nominals**

Norminals are derived by prefixal nominalization as well as by parasynthesis in Esan.

*1. Prefixal nominalization*

Nouns are often derived in Esan when each of the seven oral vowels in the language (see 1.3) which bear a low tone underlyingly, is prefixed to a verb stem. Data showed that prefixal nominalization in Esan may be semantically driven. The three semantic groups of instrumental, abstract and verbal nouns or gerunds were identified. In the derivation of instrumental and abstract nouns, the underlying L tone of the / u / was raised to a H, while the verb stems generally retained their underlying L tones, whereas, with the exception of / ɛ /, the L tone of all the prefixes were raised to a H in the derivation of gerunds.

Table XI: *Tonal patterns on prefixal nominals in Esan*

**a. Instrumental nominals**

- (i) /ù+gwè/ → / úgwè /  
 np+cover a cover

**b. Abstract nominals**

- (ii) /ù+ɣhè / → /ùɣhè /  
 np+look lookery

**c. Prefixal gerunds/verbal nouns**

- (i) / ì+rwɛ / → / írwɛ /  
 np+ robe robbing ceremony
- (ii) /è+kpà / → /ékpà /  
 np+ vomit vomitous
- (iii) / è+βòhjɛ / → /éβòhjɛ /  
 np+ dream a dream
- (iv) /ù+nɛ / → / únɛ /  
 np+run a race

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|        |                           |   |                             |
|--------|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| (v)    | /ò+ɖʒɛ /<br>np+ laugh     | → | / óɖʒɛ /<br>laughter        |
| (vii)  | /ò+bàlɔ/<br>np+ painful   | → | /óbàlɔ/<br>pain             |
| (viii) | /ò+ɾɛɛ/<br>np+ prostitute | → | /ò+ɾɛɛ/<br>prostitution     |
| (ix)   | /ɔ+tà/<br>np+ speak       | → | / ɔtà /<br>speech/utterance |
| (x)    | /à+fè/<br>np+ urinate     | → | /áfè/<br>urine              |

Tonal configurations which occurred simultaneously with change in semantic units in Esan may be summarized as follows:

- All verb stems retain their underlying low tone when any one of the oral vowels in the language is prefixed to them for lexicalization purposes.
- The underlying low tone of the /u/ prefix which derives instrumental and abstract nouns is raised to a high.
- With the exception of / ɛ /, the underlying low tone of the prefixes which derive verbal nouns is raised to a high.
- Arising from 1, 2, and 3, an all L or HL tone emerges with prefixal nominalization in Esan.

## 2. Parasynthetic gerunds/verbal nouns

The derivation of gerunds or verbal nouns from verbs and adjunctives by parasynthesis (a lexical derivation process where the root/stem is associated with a prefix and a suffix simultaneously and obligatorily) is attested in Esan. Elugbe (1984) describes this process, which is attested in Edo and Emai as the affixation of a discontinuous morpheme (DM) which is constant, to a verb stem. The form of the DM in Esan is / **ú - ɲ ì** / which bears a HL tone pattern in citation.

Table XII: *Tonal patterning in parasynthesis with verb stems*

|      |                                         |   |                                  |
|------|-----------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| (i)  | / <b>ú</b> - ɲì # nàɲɔ /<br>DM + lick   | → | / <b>únánɔ</b> ɲì /<br>licking   |
| (ii) | / <b>ú</b> - ɲì # kòkò /<br>DM + gather | → | / <b>úkókó</b> ɲì /<br>gathering |

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|                                       |   |                          |
|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| (iii) / ú - m̀ì # bàṅ /<br>DM + naked | → | / úbàṅm̀ì /<br>nakedness |
| (iv) / ú - m̀ì # vj ɛ /<br>DM + cry   | → | / úvjɛm̀ì /<br>crying    |
| (v) / ú - m̀ì # sò /<br>DM + shout    | → | / úsóm̀ì /<br>shouting   |

Table XIII: *Tonal patterning in parasynthesis with adjunctives*

|                                          |   |                                    |
|------------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| (vi) / ú - m̀ì # m ù /<br>DM + sharp     | → | / úm̀úm̀ì /<br>sharpness           |
| (vii) / ú - m̀ì # t ǎ /<br>DM + tall     | → | / útǎm̀ì /<br>tallness             |
| (viii) / ú - m̀ì # kpṛṇṇ /<br>DM + big   | → | / úkpṛṇṇm̀ì /<br>bigness/greatness |
| (ix) / ú - m̀ì # nàṛà /<br>DM + watery   | → | / únáṛám̀ì /<br>wateriness         |
| (x) / ú - m̀ì # s ɔṇṇ /<br>DM + irritate | → | / úsɔṇṇm̀ì /<br>irritating         |

Data shows that the all L tone pattern of verbs and adjunctives is raised to an all H when nominals are derived from them, while the HL of the discontinuous morpheme remains stable. Thus here, a semantic change from verbs and adjunctives to nominals occurs simultaneously with a change in tonal configuration. Osiruemu (2005) proffers two possibilities of the fate of the displaced L tones of the verb and adjunctive, as follows:

- a. They are released as floating tones
- b. They assimilate to the adjacent L tone of the DM.

### 2.2.2 Derived Adjunctives

The reduplication of nouns derives adjunctives in Esan. These adjunctives serve the semantic purpose of emphasis. The following change in tonal patterns occur with reduplication of nouns in Esan.

1. Reduplication of bisyllabic nouns with an underlying LL tone pattern result in the formation of falling glides.



Table XIV: *Tonal pattern on reduplicated LL nouns in Esan*

|       |                               |   |                           |
|-------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| (i)   | /àmɛ # àmɛ /<br>water + water | → | / àmâmɛ /<br>all water    |
| (ii)  | /àhù # àhù /<br>power +power  | → | /àhwâhù /<br>all power    |
| (iii) | / òxù # òxù /<br>up/sky       | → | / òxôxù /<br>only upwards |

Reduplication of bisyllabic nouns with a HL tone pattern results in the formation of rising glides.

Table XV: *Tonal pattern on reduplicated HL bisyllabic nouns*

|       |                                |   |                              |
|-------|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| (iv)/ | údò # údò /<br>stone stone     | → | / údǔdò /<br>only/all stones |
| (v)   | / óbɔ # óbɔ /<br>hand hand     | → | / óbǒbɔ /<br>bare hands      |
| (vi)  | / ɔtà # ɔtà /<br>speech speech | → | / ɔtɔtà /<br>all speech      |

Reduplication of trisyllabic nouns with an underlying all L tone pattern results in the formation of an alternating LH pattern with a final HH.

Table XVI: *Tonal patterning on reduplicated all L trisyllabic*

| <b>Noun</b> |                                 |   |                              |
|-------------|---------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| (vii)/      | ìròrò # ì ròrò /<br>smoke smoke | → | / ìrórìróró /<br>all smoke   |
| (viii) /    | ìzàgwɔ # ìzàgwɔ /<br>duck duck  | → | / ìzágwìzàgwɔ /<br>all ducks |
| (ix)        | /èhɛɛ # èhɛɛ /<br>fish fish     | → | / èhɛlèhɛɛ /<br>all fish     |

Reduplication of trisyllabic nouns with an underlying HHL tone pattern results in a final L tone.

Table XVII: *Tonal pattern on reduplication of HHL trisyllabic noun*

|       |                                          |   |                                 |
|-------|------------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| (x)   | / ɛkɛlè # ɛkɛlè /<br>belly belly         | → | / ɛkɛlɛkɛlè /<br>all belly      |
| (xi)  | / ísísxù # ísísxù /<br>termites termites | → | / ísísxùsísxù /<br>all termites |
| (xii) | / ɔxɔxɔ # ɔxɔxɔ /<br>fowl fowls          | → | / ɔxɔxɔxɔxɔ /<br>all fowls      |

Reduplication of trisyllabic nouns with an underlying HLL tone pattern results in a final LL.

Table XVIII: *Tonal pattern on reduplicated HLL trisyllabic nouns*

|        |                                  |   |                            |
|--------|----------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| (xiii) | / ébàlè # ébàlè /<br>food food   | → | / ébàlébàlè /<br>all food  |
| (xiv)  | / áràlè # áràlè /<br>blood blood | → | / áràláràlè /<br>all blood |
| (xv)   | / áḃìlì # áḃìlì /<br>oil oil     | → | / áḃìláḃìlì /<br>all oil   |

The alternate LHL pattern of trisyllabic nouns is retained with reduplication.

Table XIX: *Tonal pattern in reduplicated LHL trisyllabic nouns*

|        |                                      |   |                              |
|--------|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| (xvi)  | / ìtábà # ìtábà /<br>tobacco tobacco | → | / ìtábìtábà /<br>all tobacco |
| (xvii) | / ònógbò # ònógbò /<br>cat cat       | → | / ònógbònógbò /<br>all cats  |

Reduplicated bisyllabic nouns with a final falling glide retain this pattern medially and finally while trisyllabic nouns with a final falling glide lose this tone quality in medial position but retain it finally.

Table XX: *Tonal patterns on reduplicated final HL bisyllabic & trisyllabic nouns*

|         |                                |   |                          |
|---------|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| (xviii) | / ɔgɔ # ɔgɔ /<br>bottle bottle | → | / ɔgɔgɔ /<br>all bottles |
| (xix)   | / àbâ # àbâ /<br>father father | → | / àbâbâ /<br>all fathers |

|        |                                         |   |                                |
|--------|-----------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| (xx)   | /ɛmînâ # ɛmînâ /<br>cow cow             | → | /ɛmînɛmînâ<br>all cows         |
| (xxi)  | /óliɾí # óliɾí /<br>confusion confusion | → | /óliɾóliɾî /<br>all confusion  |
| (xxi)  | /ùkòkô # ùkòkô /<br>container container | → | /ùkòkúkòkô /<br>all containers |
| (xxii) | /àgbèdê # àgbèdê /<br>needle needle     | → | /àgbèdàgbèdê /<br>all needles  |

The changes in tonal configurations which occur simultaneously with changes in meaning of Esan lexical Formations are summarized in charts A and B. In this regard, in line with tone marking principles, more than one occurrence of a given level or contour tone is shown as one instance of occurrence.

Chart A: *Tonal patterning on non derived Esan lexical formations*

| Non-derived Lexical Formations | Tonal Configurations       |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Nouns                       | L, HL, LHL, LHL, HHL, HLHL |
| Verbs/Adjunctives              | L                          |
| Diectics                       | L, HLHL, LHL               |
| Numerals                       | L, LH, HL, LHL             |

Chart B: *Tonal changes on derived Esan lexical formations.*

| Derived lexical formations | Tonal input            | Tonal output                      |
|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1.Prefixal nominals        | L                      | HL                                |
| 2.Parasynthetic nominal    | HL, L                  | HL                                |
| 3.Adjunctives              | L, H(L), LH, LHL, HLHL | LHL, LHL, LHLH, LHLH, HLHL, HLHL, |

## Conclusion

This work is a contribution to the study of semantics as one part of the bi componential structure of language. It emphasizes the linguistic fact that tone is functional in tone languages, by drawing attention to the changes which occur in tonal patterning on Esan lexical formations, when the latter undergo semantic changes. Specifically, the non derived lexical formations of nouns and third dimension of demonstratives and numerals bore combination tonal patterns of H and L tones. Verbs, adjunctives, personal pronouns and the first dimensions of demonstratives bore all L tones in citation. Some derived

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lexical formations of norminals and adjunctives changed tonal patterning with a change in lexical unit.

This study went beyond the assertion that tone is functional in Esan. It examined Esan lexicon for specific tonal behaviour which correspond with changes in Esan semantic units. These findings would contribute to further research on tonal behaviour and meaning in Esan.

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## 50. The Theory of Pro-drop and the Missing Subject in Iẓon<sup>1</sup>

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This paper examines the missing subject in Iẓon within the theory of *pro-drop*. It presents new evidence about the licensing condition for *pro-drop*, and argues that Iẓon may be admitted into the league of *pro-drop* or null subject languages, even though the language exhibits neither a rich system of subject-verb agreement morphology nor a rich system of subject-clitic agreement. The paper draws data mainly from the conversational style in Iẓon, and therefore concludes that the missing subject in Iẓon is given discourse identification rather than *pro*-identification, as we find in most popular literature on the *pro-drop* phenomenon.

### 0. Introduction

The *pro-drop* phenomenon is one of the three major parameters of universal grammar which was suggested in the principles-and-parameters (P&P) approach to the study of syntax along which languages of the world can be distinguished<sup>2</sup>. A *pro-drop* language is one in which the subject of a finite clause can be suppressed in overt syntax. In other words, the subject position of a *pro-drop* language can contain an unexpressed (empty) category. This null subject has been referred to as the 'small *pro*'. In a typical *pro-drop* language, the content of the subject is recoverable from the syntactic environment; hence, the overt pronoun in the subject position of the sentence can delete.

Now, there are two typological sets of language where the licensing condition for *pro-drop* has been identified<sup>3</sup>. They are:

- a. languages with "strong AGR", i.e. those that have a rich system of verb-agreement where the strong AGR serves as a proper governor to the null subject (e.g. Italian and Spanish), and
- b. languages with "weak AGR", but whose clitic system is rich enough to render the subject position redundant in overt syntax, thereby allowing an overt pronoun in the subject position of the sentence to delete (e.g. Degema and Ibibio).

In the first type of language, the contents of the null element in the external argument position (i.e. the subject) are recoverable from the inflectional paradigms, while in the second type, subject clitics exhibit a rich system of agreement, such that they supply all the relevant information needed in identifying the referent of a null element in the external argument position.

An interesting challenge to the theory of *pro-drop* would be to find a language which has neither rich inflectional paradigms nor a rich subject clitic system, but which routinely licenses a null category in the external argument position in finite clauses<sup>4</sup>.



In this paper, we shall examine data from Kolokuma-Izon<sup>5</sup> with a view to finding out whether the null subject we find in Kolokuma-Izon can be accommodated within any of the two language typologies. To do this, we shall first examine the general theory of *pro*-drop in Universal Grammar. Secondly, we shall re-examine the status of the so-called short subject pronouns in Izon with a view to finding out whether they play the same role as the subject clitics in Ibibio or Degema. Next, we shall examine cases of omission of subject pronouns in the conversational style as well as embedded clauses in Kolokuma-Izon. A crucial issue in this paper is whether we shall take the omitted subjects in Kolokuma-Izon as cases of *pro*-drop, where neither a rich verb-agreement system nor a subject clitic system provides any explanation for the presence of the null subject.

The framework adopted here is the P&P theory with special focus on the Minimalist Program<sup>6</sup>.

### 1. The Theory of *Pro*-Drop in Universal Grammar

Subject omission is a pervasive and an extensively studied phenomenon in Romance languages, such as Italian and Spanish (cf. Chomsky 1981, 1982, Burzio 1986, Rizzi 1986, Riemsdijk and Williams 1986, Haegeman 1994, Harbert 1995: Radford 1997(a). & (b), etc.)<sup>7</sup>. Recently, it has been reported that the following Nigeria languages are also *pro*-drop languages: Igbo (Eze 1995), Ibibio (Ndimele and Oliveria ???) and Degema (Ndimele and Kari 2000). Languages where finite clauses show an apparent lack of overt subjects in the spec of AGRsP position (i.e. the subject position of the sentence) have been described as *pro*-drop or null subject languages, while those whose finite clauses cannot allow the suppression of the spec of AGRsP have been described as non-*pro*-drop languages. The situation where declarative finite clauses can routinely allow the spec of AGRsP to be suppressed in overt syntax has been described as the *pro*-drop parameter. Languages of the world vary along this parameter.

Subject omission in finite clauses has been described as the *pro*-drop phenomenon, and the resultant empty category has been referred to as *pro*. The empty category, *pro*, has no overt phonetic form.

It was a puzzle to find declarative finite clauses showing apparent lack of subjects, bearing in mind the constraint imposed on the subject position by Chomsky's (1982) Extended Projection Principle, which states that sentences must have a subject, or Burzio's (1986) generalization that accusative case-assigning verbs must have  $\theta$ -subject. To have a  $\theta$ -subject means that the subject position of such verbs must contain phonetically audible and non-pleonastic subjects.

Ever since Chomsky (1981) drew attention to the phenomenon of *pro*-drop, a number of proposals have been made to account for the origin of or the licensing condition for the null or missing subject in finite clauses in various languages. Our major concern here is to review some of these proposals with a view to noting which of them is plausible for our present purpose.

It has been argued by Hyams and Wexler (1993) that the missing subject phenomenon (whether *pro* or any other kind of non-trace empty category) has its roots in the child's language development. Their position is that in child language, it is normal to delete any category which has less informational content. The implication

here is that a non-trace null subject results from the deletion of a substantive constituent whose presence does not add any significant meaning to the information content of its sentence.

There are a number of problems inherent in the above explanation as the cause of *pro*. One, the position does not explain why it is the subject that must delete. Again, it does not explain why this missing subject phenomenon is pervasive in some languages, and not in others. Even though one admits that it is possible to omit any category that does have much communicative significance in a sentence, the unresolved problem would be that there are languages where the presence of certain categories in the sentence might render certain positions redundant, yet omission of any kind is barred

A more popular view about the origin of or the licensing condition for *pro*-drop is the one presented in Chomsky (1981), Sells (1985), Riemsdijk and Williams (1986), Haegeman (1994), Radford (1997a & 1997b). The opinion held by the above scholars is that *pro* is licensed by a rich system of verb-agreement. The implication here is that it is this rich system of verb-agreement that causes the phonetically audible noun phrase in the subject position to delete in overt syntax. When the verbal morphology of a language is rich enough, the content of the subject of a finite clause can be recovered by virtue of the inflection. In languages such as Italian and Spanish, the overt pronoun in the spec of AGRsP of a finite clause has no significant meaning in the presence of the agreement morpheme.

In the table below, we compare the verbal inflection of Italian and that of English, so as to show how the two languages differ in terms of richness of agreement paradigms:

|           | <i>Italian</i> | <i>English</i> |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|
| 1sg       | io arrivo      | I arrive       |
| 1pl       | noi arriviamo  | we arrive      |
| 2sg       | tu arrivi      | you arrive     |
| 2pl       | voi arrivate   | you arrive     |
| 3sg (mas) | lui arriva     | he arrives     |
| 3sg (fem) | lei arriva     | she arrives    |
| 3pl       | loro arrivano  | they arrive    |

From the above data, we observe that Italian has six different forms to mark all persons, while English has only two. In Italian, Subject-Verb agreement applies for all combinations of persons and numbers without exception, while in English, Subject-Verb agreement applies only in the third person singular. Since the different persons in English are not uniquely distinguished, ambiguity must arise if the relevant subject pronoun element is dropped in finite clauses.

It is argued that the *pro* which results due to the rich system of verb-agreement is different from an overt pronominal element in the sense that it is restricted to the subject position of finite clauses. The *pro* in question is also different from the (abstract) 'big' PRO, in the sense that the latter is only found in the subject position of non-finite clauses. The implication here is that *pro* and PRO are in complementary distribution; where one occurs, the other does not.

In the earlier versions of P&P theory, it was suggested that *pro* must be governed by a tensed INFL(ection) which contains a set of nominal features such as number, person, and perhaps gender, while PRO is said to occur in an ungoverned position, because the INFL of its clause is [- Tense]<sup>8</sup>. What is implied here is that a [- Tense] INFL is not a potential governor. The fundamental principles guiding the licensing of *pro* in Italian- or Spanish-type language have been aptly summarised by Rizzi (1986), as cited by Harbert (1995:225): "*pro* is licensed if case-governed by a head belonging to a designated class of licensing heads". Harbert further states that in languages with *pro*-drop, the AGRs or INFL (as in the earlier versions of the P&P approach to the study of syntax) is the licensing head. In a non-*pro*-drop language, on the other hand, there is no licensing head. Hence, *pro* is not allowed in any context. In addition to being licensed by AGRs, the identity of *pro* must be specified through binding by the  $\phi$ -features (=phi-features) of AGRs. In a *pro*-drop language, *pro* is coindexed with phi-features (i.e. number, person and perhaps gender) of its governing head.

In the Italian- or Spanish-type of language, the verb morphology is rich enough to render an overt pronoun in the spec of AGRsP position redundant, as we can see below:

Italian Data (cf. Haegman 1994, Radford 1997 (a) & (b)):

- 1)
  - a. Maria parla  
(Maria speak-3sg.AGR-sf)  
'Maria speaks'.
  - b. Lei parla  
(she speak-3sg.AGR-sf)  
'She speaks'.
  - c. - parla  
(*pro* speak-3sg.AGR-sf)  
'She speaks'.
- 2)
  - a. I ragazzo venga  
(the boy come-3sg.AGR-sf)  
'The boy comes'.
  - b. Lui venga  
(he come-3sg.AGR-sf)  
'He comes'.
  - c. - parla  
(*pro* come-3sg.AGR-sf)  
'He comes'.
- 3)
  - a. I ragazzi vengano  
(the boys come-3pl.AGR-sf)  
'The boys come'.

- 
- b.    loro veng**ano**  
       (they come-3pl.AGR-sf)  
       ‘They come’.
- c.    - veng**ano**  
       (*pro* come-3pl.AGR-sf)  
       ‘They come’.
- 4)    a.    lo veng**o**  
       (I come-lsg.sf)  
       ‘I come’.
- b.    - veng**o**  
       (*pro* come-lsg.sf)  
       ‘I come’.

Spanish Data (cf. Sells 1985):

- 5)    a.    - Ilegu**é**  
       (*pro* arrived-lsg.AGR-sf)  
       ‘I arrived’.
- b.    - Ilegast**e**  
       (*pro* arrived-2sg.AGR-sf)  
       ‘you (sg.) arrived’.
- c.    - Ileg<sup>6</sup>  
       (*pro* arrived-3sg.AGR-sf)  
       ‘she arrived’.

From the above examples, we can see that both Italian and Spanish have a rich system of subject-agreement. In Italian or Spanish, there is a morphological rule which spells out the proper morphological form of AGRs as a suffix<sup>9</sup>. This rule has a rich paradigm, and it is systematically consistent in all combinations of persons and numbers. The syntactic format under which the spell-out condition for the agreement morpheme manifests is presented thus:

- 6)    [spec AGRsP]<sub>i</sub> — Verb + T = AGRs<sub>i</sub>
- ↓

pro

↓ ← Spell-out

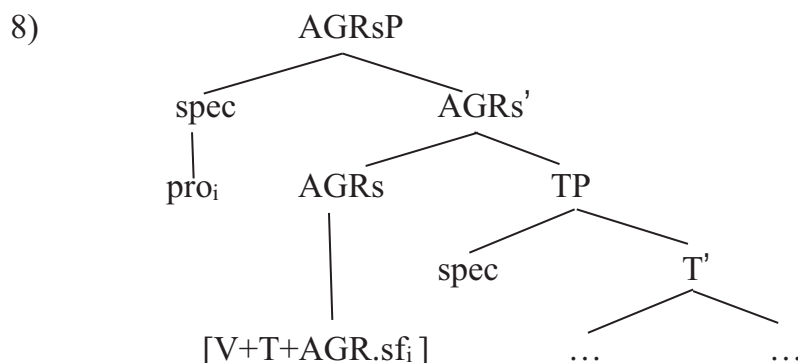
suffix

Chomsky (1981 and 1982) states that languages such as Italian and Spanish whose verb agreement system contains sufficient information to render the presence of an overt subject pronoun redundant have "strong" AGR, while those that have defective paradigms, such as English, Chinese and Japanese are said to have "weak" AGR<sup>10</sup>. A strong AGR can identify an empty category in the spec of AGRsP position, while a weak AGR fails to do so. The identification of the features of the subject in a *pro*-drop

language of the Italian- or Spanish-type is achieved via AGR.sf. In Italian or Spanish, *pro* is licensed under the following configuration:

- 7)  $pro_i [V+T+AGR-sf_i]$

We can represent the structure in (7) on a tree as follows:



In (7) or (8) above, the identification of *pro* via AGR.sf is represented by coindexation. That is the *pro* is coindexed with the agreement suffix. The coindexation of *pro* and the AGR suffix is in accordance with the binding principle which states thus:

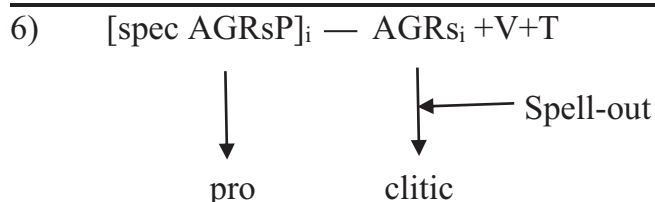
- 9) Coindex *pro* with AGR.sf in the accessible domain of AGR.sf.

In orthodox binding theory, the accessible domain of AGR.sf is defined, as follows:

- 10) *pro* is in the accessible domain of AGR.sf<sub>i</sub> iff AGR.sf<sub>i</sub> c-commands *pro* and there is no  $\alpha_j$ ,  $\alpha_j$  the subject position of AGR.sf<sub>j</sub>, such that AGR.sf<sub>i</sub> c-commands AGR.sf<sub>j</sub> and AGR.sf<sub>j</sub> c-commands *pro*.

Eze (1995), Ndimele and Oliveria (2002, 2015) and Ndimele and Kari (2003) have argued that the licensing of *pro* need not only depend on richness of verb-agreement morphology. It has been observed that argument *pro* can also be found in languages with an impoverished verb-agreement system. Such languages as Ibibio and Degema have defective paradigms with regard to verb-agreement morphology. But the paucity in verb-agreement paradigms is augmented by a rich clitic system. In these languages, there are subject clitics which also encode the features of number and person to such an extent that the overt pronoun in the spec of AGRsP in these languages may be dropped in overt syntax.

Ndimele and Kari (2003) argue that "the subject clitic in Degema is the lexical head of AGRs (i.e. it is base-generated in AGRs). In other words, the subject clitics are the lexical manifestations of AGR". They further state that there is a morphological rule in Degema which "spells out the proper morphological form of AGRs as a clitic. This rule has a rich paradigm, and is systematically consistent". The syntactic configuration which necessitates the spell-out condition of the subject clitic is presented thus:



Ndimele and Kari (2003) have argued that the subject clitics found in Degema are not full-fledged NPs, and differ from overt personal pronouns in several ways.

Below are the examples cited by Ndimele and Kari (2003) to prove that Degema is a *pro*-drop language:

- 12)a. Mée m̀-tá-n m'ékì.  
(I 1sg.cl.-go-pst pr-market)  
'I went to the market'.
- b. - m̀-tá-n m'ékì.  
(*pro* 1sg.cl.-go-pst pr-market)  
'I went to the market'.
- 13)a. Eni ẹ-tá-n m'ékì.  
(we 1pl.cl.-go-pst pr-market)  
'We went to the market'.
- b. - ẹ-tá-n m'ékì.  
(*pro* 1pl.cl.-go-pst pr-market)  
'We went to the market'.
- 14)a. Wọ̀ ̀-tá-n m'ékì.  
(you 2sg.cl.-go-pst pr-market)  
'You went to the market'.
- b. - ̀-tá-n m'ékì.  
(*pro* 2sg.cl.-go-pst pr-market)  
'You went to the market'.
- 15)a. Máány à-tá-n m'ékì.  
(you 2pl.cl.-go-pst pr-market)  
'You(pl.) went to the market'.
- b. - à-tá-n m'ékì  
(*pro* 2pl.ci.-go-pst pr-market)  
'You(pl.) went to the market'.
- 16)a. Oyì ọ-tá-n m'ékì  
(she 3sg.cl.-go-pst pr-market)  
'She went to the market'.



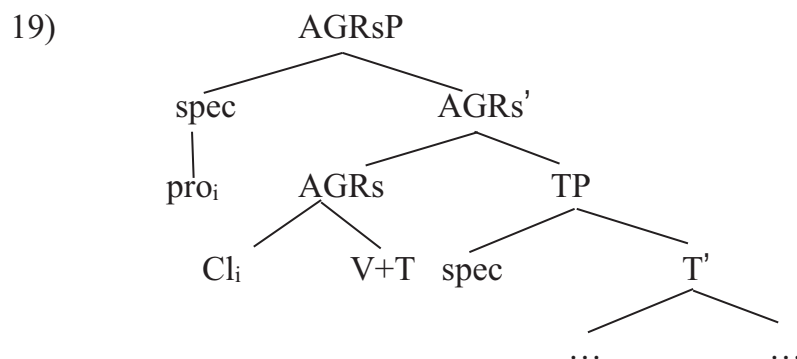
- b. -      ò-tà-n      m'èkì  
 (she 3sg.cl-go-pst    pr-market)  
 'She went to the market'.
- 17)a. Bááw ò-tà-n      m'èkì.  
 (they 3pl.cl-go-pst pr-market)  
 'They went to the market'.
- b. -      ò-tà-n      m'èkì.  
 (pro 3pl.ci-go-pst    pr-market)  
 'They went to the market'.

Note that the above examples from Degema are similar to those in Italian which we cited in (1) - (4) above. Like Italian and Spanish sentences, declarative finite clauses routinely allow their subject pronouns to be dropped. The dropping of the pronoun in the spec of the AGRsP position of finite clauses is an essential attribute of a *pro*-drop language. Apart from allowing their subjects to be suppressed, the content of the missing subjects in the spec of the AGRsP position in a finite clause is recoverable from the syntactic surroundings. In Degema, subject pronouns carry no further information content in the presence of the subject clitics.

Based on the foregoing observations, Ndimele and Kari (2003) argue that Degema, like the Romance languages, such as Italian and Spanish, is a *pro*-drop language. But the licensing condition in the Degema-type of language is different from the Italian-type. In Degema, *pro* is licensed under the following configuration:

- 18)  $pro_i [CL_i + V+T]$

We can represent the structure in (18) on a tree as follows:



From the foregoing discussion, we observe that a typical *pro*-drop language can license both overt and covert subjects. There are two options with regard to the content of the subject of a finite clause in a *pro*-drop language: covert or overt realisation of the pronominal subject. When the subject pronoun is overtly present, there is a double realisation of the content. According to Haegeman (1994:21), "the overt realization of the subject pronoun has some semantic or pragmatic effect: for

instance it signals contrast or it focuses on the subject, as we can see from the following example from Italian cited by Haegeman (1994:21):

- 21) Lei parte                      lui arriva  
       (he leave-3g-agr.sf he arrive-3g-agr.sf)  
       ‘She leaves and he arrives’.

But when there is no special focus or contrast on the subject, the pronoun in that position is apparently suppressed (i.e. omitted).

Another characteristic of *pro*-drop languages which has often been cited in the literature is subject inversion. It is argued that a *pro*-drop language differs from a non-*pro*-drop language, in the sense that in the former, a phonetically audible subject can occur in the post-verbal position (Haegeman 1994 and Eze 1995). Subject inversion of the type described above does not take place in a non-*pro*-drop language.

In order to understand how subject inversion of the type we described above applies in a *pro*-drop language, let us compare the following sets of data from Italian with their equivalents from English:

- 22)a.  $t_i$         é arrivato                      Maria<sub>i</sub>)  
       (-        be arrive-pst-AGR.sf Maria)  
       ‘Maria has arrived’.
- b.    \* $t_i$     is arrived Maria<sub>i</sub>.
- 23)a.  $t_i$     ha    etelefonato                      sua moglie<sub>i</sub>  
       (-    have telephone-pst-AGR.sf    your wife)  
       ‘Your wife has phoned’.
- b.    \* $t_i$     has telephoned your wife<sub>i</sub>.

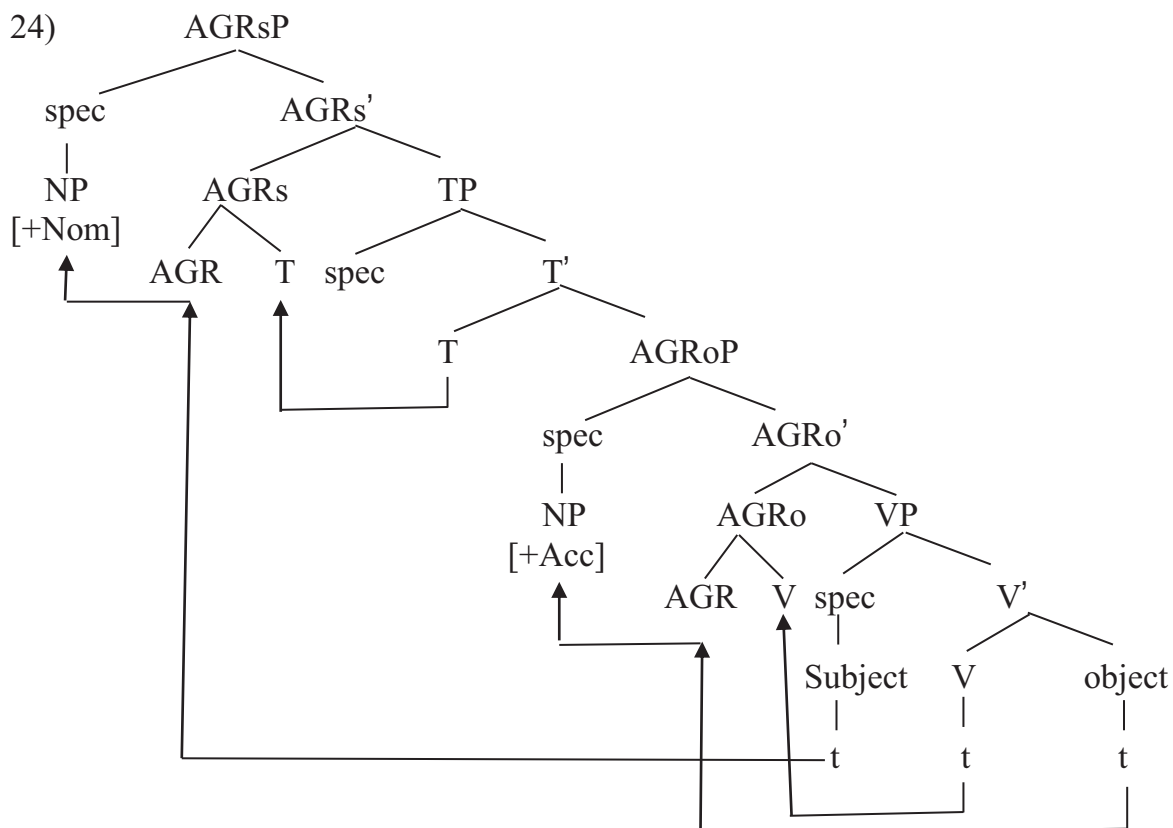
In the (a) and (b) sentences above, we observe that the true subjects have been moved into the post-verbal position. Whereas this kind of optional movement is possible in Italian as a *pro*-drop language (cf. (218) and (23a)), it is prohibited in English as a non-*pro*-drop language (cf. (22b) and (23b)).

## 2. The Pronominal System of Iẓon

Iẓon belongs to the West Ijọ sub-group of the larger Ijoid group of languages. It is "the largest language of the Ijo group of languages" (Efere and Williamson 2000:98). Iẓon is spoken as a major language in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. It is also spoken by a significant population of Delta State, Edo State, and Ondo State, Nigeria. The Kolokuma dialect of Iẓon, from which we shall draw data for this work, is spoken in "Kolokuma-Opokuma Local Government Area" of Bayelsa State, "comprising Ayibabiri, Igbedi, Kajama, Kalama, Odi, Okoloba, Olobiri, Sampou and Seibokorogba" (Efere and Williamson 2000:1(0)). The creation of new local government areas in Bayelsa has, however, affected the above observation by Efere and Williamson.

Williamson and Timitimi (1983:xxvii) recognize two significant level tones in Iẓon. They are high and low tones.

The basic word-order in Iẓon is Subject-Object-Verb. In other words, Iẓon is a verb-final language. In the P&P syntax, word order correlates with case directionality. The position of an argument in a language is dependent upon its case checking domain. The structural configuration for the derivation of a simple sentence in Iẓon is as represented thus:



In MP, it is suggested that a minimal sentence which was represented by IP in some earlier version of X' -bar theory is now" decomposed into two functional projections: AGRP and TP" (Haegeman 1994:620). It is also suggested that both the subject and object of the sentence originate internally within the VP. In Iẓon, the subject is moved into the spec of AGRsP position via AGRs for its Nominative case features to be checked off, while the object is moved into the spec of AGRoP position via AGRo for its Accusative case features to be checked off. The movement operations involving the subject and the object must take place before Spell-Out. The verb in Iẓon also moves to AGRo to activate finiteness. It is under the configuration [AGRs + T] that the Nominative case is licensed in Iẓon, while it is under the configuration [AGRo + V] that the Accusative case is licensed. In Iẓon, the object NP must raise into the spec of AGRoP position, because its case properties must be checked off in that vicinity. The consequence of this is that the object must precede the verb in the derivation. In English, on the other hand, the object NP may not raise into the spec of AGRoP position, since its case features have already been checked off at a lower case position. Whereas the case directionality for the object NP is rightwards in a verb-initial

language, it is leftwards in a verb-final one. This marks the difference between a verb-initial language and a verb-final one, such as Iẓon.

Iẓon has a rich pronominal system. The pronouns of Iẓon have been distinguished in terms of the features of case, number, person and gender. Williamson (1965), Williamson and Timitimi (1983) and Egberipou and Williamson (1994) also distinguish Iẓon pronouns in terms of length. They divide Iẓon pronouns into long and short depending on the context in which they are used. The short pronouns are also distinguished in terms of those that precede lexical items beginning with consonants and those that precede lexical items beginning with vowels.

Since our purpose in this paper is to account for the omission of pronouns in the subject position of the sentence, we shall limit our discussion to the forms that Iẓon pronouns can take in the subject position.

Below is a table showing the forms of long and short pronouns in Iẓon in the nominative case which we adapted from Williamson (1965), Williamson and Timitimi (1983) and Egberipou and Williamson (1994):

| Person          | Number | Gender | Full Pronouns | Short Pronouns    |               |
|-----------------|--------|--------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
|                 |        |        |               | Before Consonants | Before Vowels |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> | sg.    |        | arí 'I'       | i/i (STA)         | yeé           |
|                 | pl.    |        | wónì 'we'     | wó                | wǒ            |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | sg.    |        | ári 'you'     | i/i (STA)         | yě            |
|                 | pl.    |        | omíni 'you'   | o                 | orǒ           |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> | sg.    | Mas.   | erí 'he'      | u/u (STA)         | woó           |
|                 | sg.    | Fem.   | áraú 'she'    | a                 | arǎ           |
|                 | pl.    |        | omíní 'they'  | o                 | orǒ           |

Below we present examples of sentences adapted from Egberipou and Williamson (1994) to show the distribution of the long and short pronouns in Iẓon:

- 25)a. arí    b̀uru    akí    boyemi.  
 (1sg. yam take come-prog)  
 'I am bringing yam'.
- b. I        b̀uru    akí    boyemi.  
 (1sg. yam take come-prog)  
 'I'm bringing yam'.
- c. \*arí    b̀uru    yeé-akí    boyemi.  
 (1sg. yam lsg.-take come-prog)
- d. \*-        b̀uru    yeé-akí    boyemi.  
 (NT yam lsg.-take come-prog)
- e. \* -        b̀uru    akí    boyemi.

- 
- 26)a. wónì bùru akí boyemi.  
(1pl. yam take come-prog)  
'We are bringing yam'.
- b. wó bùru akí boyemi.  
(1pl. yam take come-prog)  
'W're bringing yam'.
- c. \*wónì bùru wó-akí boyemi.  
(1pl. yam 1pl.-take come-prog)
- d. \*- bùru wó-akí boyemi.  
(NT yam 1pl.-take come-prog)
- e. \*- bùru akí boyemi.
- 27)a. árí bùru akí boyemi.  
(2sg. yam take come-prog)  
'You (sg.) are bringing yam'.
- b. Ì bùru àkí boyemi.  
(2sg. yam take come-prog)  
'You're bringing yam'.
- c. \*árí bùru yě-akí boyemi.  
(2sg. yam 2sg.-take come-prog)
- d. \* - bùru yě-akí boyemi.  
(NT yam 2sg.-take come-prog)
- e. \* - bùru àkí boyemi.
- 28)a. ọmínì buru akí boyemi.  
(2pl. yam take come-prog)  
'You (pl.) are bringing yam'.
- b. ọ búru àkí boyemi.  
(2pl. yam take come-prog)  
'You're bringing yam'.
- c. \*ọmínì búru oro-akí boyemi.  
(2pl. yam 2pl.-take come-prog)
- d. \*- buru ọrọ-akí boyemi.  
(NT yam 2pl.-take come-prog)

- 
- 29)a. erì/àràù                      buru akí boyemi.  
       (3sg.mas/3sg.fem yam take come-prog)  
       ‘He/she is bringing yam’.
- b. u                      buru/a                      búru akí boyemi.  
       (3sg.mas yam/sg.mas yam take come-prog)  
       ‘He’s/she’s bringing yam’.
- c. \*erì/àràù                      buru woó-/arǎ-akí boyemi.  
       (3sg.mas/3sg.fem yam 3sg.mas/3sg.fem-take come-prog)
- d. \*- buru woó-/arǎ-akí boyemi.  
       (NT yam 3sg.mas/3sg.fem-take come-prog)
- e. \*- buru akí boyemi.
- 30)a. ọmìní bùru akí boyemi.  
       (3pl. yam take come-prog)  
       ‘They are bringing yam’.
- b. ọ                      bùru akí boyemi.  
       (3pl. yam take come-prog)  
       ‘They’re bringing yam’.
- c. \*ọmìní bùru ọrọ̀-akí boyemi.  
       (they yam 2pl.-take come-prog)
- d. \*- buru ọrọ̀-akí boyemi.  
       (NT yam 3pl.-take come-prog)
- e. \*- buru akí boyemi.

From the foregoing examples, we observe, following Egberipou and Williamson (1994), that whereas the long pronouns have no tonal effect on their accompanying objects, the tonal behaviour of objects that accompany short pronouns is dependent on the tonal properties of such pronouns. Secondly, the short pronouns with close vowels are phonologically conditioned by the ATR quality of the vowel in the following syllable.

A preliminary conclusion that can be drawn, based on the above observations, is that the short pronouns do not have the same distributional potentials as the full-fledged NPs in *Izõn*. But can these observations produce any undesirable consequences in the analysis of the elements in question as pronouns? In order for one to accept or reject the analyses by previous scholars regarding the status of the so-called short pronouns, it may be necessary to address the following issues:



- a) Can one refuse to accept the so-called short pronouns as true pronouns on the basis of the irregularities concerning their distribution and their phonetic form?
- b) Are there instances where the so-called pronouns have displayed some of the major characteristics of full-fledged NPs in Iẓon?
- c) Have the so-called short pronouns satisfied other parameters for testing the nominal status of a category?
- d) Can the so-called short pronouns be reanalyzed as subject clitics like those identified in Ibibio and Degema, since they also encode N-features of person number and gender?

Our purpose in this section is to address the issues raised by the questions above. First, tonal influence of a constituent on an adjacent mora or the ATR-feature dependence is not a sufficient reason for rejecting the analysis which describes the elements in question as pronouns. There are other universal parameters for testing the nominal status of any category. The most important is the ability of a category to occupy an argument position as well as to serve as a co-conjunct<sup>12</sup> in an NP co-ordinate construction, and the ability to serve as the head of TOP in a topicalised construction.

In Iẓon, a short pronoun can serve as a conjunct in an NP co-ordinate construction with another short pronoun, a long pronoun or a full-fledged noun phrase (cf. (31) - (33)). This is in keeping with a universal grammatical constraint which states that only constituents of equal functional status can be conjoined.

- 31)a. áráù                      mò arí                      mò boyemi.  
       (3sg.fem                conj 1sg.                conj come-prog)  
       ‘She and I are coming’.
- b. à                      mò ì                      mòmò boyemi.  
       (3sg.fem                conj 1sg.                conj come-prog)  
       ‘She and I are coming’.
- 32)a. erí                      mò áráù                      mò boyemi.  
       (3sg.mas                conj 3sg.fem                conj come-prog).  
       ‘He and she are coming’.
- b. ù                      mò a                      mòmò boyemi.  
       (3sg.mas                conj 3sg.fem                conj come-prog).  
       ‘He and she are coming’.
- 33)a. ù mọ́                      Ebieré mò bóyemi.  
       (he conj                Ebiere conj come-prog)  
       ‘He and Ebiere are coming’.
- b. Ebieré mò u                      mòmò boyemi.  
       (Ebiere conj 3sg.mas conj come-prog)  
       ‘Ebiere and he are coming’.

It is also possible for the so-called short pronoun in Iẓon to serve as the head of a topicalised construction, like any other full-fledged NP in Iẓon, as in the following examples:

- 34)a. Ebieré k<sub>i</sub> - naáma fẹẹm<sub>i</sub>.  
 (" FOC animal-def-art buy-pst)  
 a'. [CP Ebieré<sub>i</sub> [FOC k<sub>i</sub>][AGRsP t'<sub>i</sub> [AGRs Fm][TP [T Fn]] [AGRoP namaá<sub>j</sub> [VP t<sub>i</sub> fẹẹm<sub>i</sub> t<sub>j</sub> ]]]]  
 CH: < Ebieré<sub>i</sub> ... t'<sub>i</sub> ... t<sub>i</sub> > < namaá<sub>j</sub>, ... t<sub>j</sub> >  
 'It was Ebieré who bought the meat'.
- b. áràú k<sub>i</sub> - nama fẹẹm<sub>i</sub>.  
 (3sg.fem FOC animal buy-pst)  
 b'. [CP áràú<sub>i</sub> [FOC k<sub>i</sub>][AGRsP t'<sub>i</sub> [AGRs Fm][TP [T Fn]] [AGRoP nama<sub>j</sub> [VP t<sub>i</sub> fẹẹm<sub>i</sub> t<sub>j</sub> ]]]]  
 CH: < áràú<sub>i</sub>, ... t'<sub>i</sub>,... t<sub>i</sub> > < nama<sub>j</sub> .... t<sub>j</sub> >  
 'It was she who bought the meat'.
- c. à k<sub>i</sub> k<sub>i</sub> - náma fẹẹm<sub>i</sub>.  
 (3sg.fem FOC animal buy-pst)  
 c'. [CP à<sub>i</sub> [FOC k<sub>i</sub>][AGRsP t'<sub>i</sub> [AGRs Fm][TP [T Fn]] [AGRoP nama<sub>j</sub> [VP t<sub>i</sub> fẹẹm<sub>i</sub>.t<sub>j</sub> ]]]]  
 CH: < à<sub>i</sub>, ... t'<sub>i</sub>, ... t<sub>i</sub> > < náma<sub>j</sub>, ... t<sub>j</sub> >  
 'It was she who bought the meat'.

From the foregoing, we observe that the so-called short pronouns have the same distributional potential as other full-fledged NPs in Iẓon, even though they often provoke phonological and morphological changes within their domain. They do not behave like the subject clitics of the Ibibio or Degema-type. In Ibibio or Degema, the subject clitics can be used in conjunction with personal pronouns as in the (a) sentences from (12) - (17). In Iẓon, the so-called short pronouns cannot co-occur with the so-called long pronouns. This accounts for why the (c) sentences in (25) - (30) are ungrammatical. Since the so-called pronouns have satisfied the major parameters for testing the nominal status of a category, we have no reason to reject the analysis by Williamson (1965), Williamson and Timitimi (1983) and Egberipou and Williamson (1994) in calling them (short) pronouns.

As nominals, the short pronouns are generated in the spec of AGRs-P position if there is no other NP in that position. Unlike the subject clitics in Ibibio and Degema, the short pronouns are not the lexical manifestations of AGRs. If they were clitics, they would serve as the lexical heads of AGRs, thereby leaving the spec of AGRsP position vacant for the occurrence of a substantive nominal or a *pro*. The items identified as short pronouns cannot co-exist in a sentence with another substantive nominal subject. This situation is, however, normal in Ibibio and Degema.

### 3. The Non-trace Null Subject in Iẓon

The purpose of this section is to examine some constructions in Iẓon in which it is possible to suppress the subject position in overt syntax. We shall first provide

relevant data in Iẓon to prove that subjectless finite clauses do exist. Second, we shall examine the missing subject in Iẓon within the current debate on the *pro*-drop phenomenon in general linguistic theory.

### 3.1 The Primary Data in Iẓon

In Iẓon, it is possible to have finite clauses which show apparent lack of overt subjects. The missing subjects are not as a result of moving a constituent from any syntactic position into another known syntactic position. Egberipou and Williamson (1994) noted two different constructions where it is possible to suppress the subject of a finite clause in overt syntax in Iẓon<sup>13</sup>.

First, it has been observed that the subject position of a finite clause in conversational style in Iẓon may be suppressed in overt syntax, as in:

- 35)a. Speaker: dengi yó kò - múyemàá?  
(which place LOC-FOC NT go-prog-Q)

a'. [CP dengi yó<sub>i</sub> [FOC kò<sub>j</sub>] [AGRS<sub>P</sub> NT<sub>j</sub> [AGRS<sub>S</sub> Fm] [TP Fn]] [AGRoP t'<sub>i</sub> [VP t<sub>j</sub> múyemàá t<sub>j</sub> ]]]]<sup>14</sup>

CH: < dengi yó<sub>i</sub>, ... t'<sub>i</sub>, ... t<sub>i</sub> > < NT<sub>j</sub> ... t<sub>j</sub> >

'Where are you going?

- b. Respondent: wáři kòò - múyemi.  
(house LOC-FOC NT go-prog)

b'. [CP wáři<sub>i</sub> [FOC kòò<sub>j</sub>] [AGRS<sub>P</sub> NT<sub>j</sub> [AGRS<sub>S</sub> Fm] [TP [T Fn]] [AGRoP t'<sub>i</sub> [VP t<sub>j</sub> [VP t<sub>j</sub> múyemàá t<sub>j</sub> ]]]]]]

CH: < wáři<sub>i</sub>, ... t'<sub>i</sub>, ... t<sub>i</sub> > < NT<sub>j</sub>, ... t<sub>j</sub> >

'I'm going to the house'.

- 36)a. Speaker: Te yé kị - tųongaá?  
(what thing FOC NT cook-fut-Q)

a'. [cp Te yé<sub>i</sub> [FOC kị<sub>j</sub>] [AGRS<sub>P</sub> NT<sub>j</sub> [AGRS<sub>S</sub> Fm] [TP [T Fn]] [AGRoP t'<sub>i</sub> [VP t<sub>j</sub> tuongaa' t<sub>j</sub> ]]]]

CH: < Te yé<sub>i</sub>, ... t'<sub>i</sub>, ... t<sub>i</sub> > < NT<sub>j</sub>, ... t<sub>j</sub> >

'What will you cook?'

- b. Respondent: Fųlọ kị - tųongị.  
(soup FOC NT cook-fut)

b'. [CP Fųlọ<sub>i</sub> [FOC kị<sub>j</sub>] [AGRS<sub>P</sub> NT<sub>j</sub> [AGRS<sub>S</sub> Fm] [TP [T Fn]] [AGRoP t'<sub>i</sub> [VP t<sub>i</sub> tųongị t<sub>j</sub> ]]]]

CH: < Fųlọ<sub>i</sub>, ... t'<sub>i</sub>, ... t<sub>i</sub> > < NT<sub>j</sub>, ... t<sub>j</sub> >

'I'll cook soup'.

- 37)a. Speaker: Te yé kị - subonimí?  
(what thing FOC NT carry-stat-Q)

a'. [CP Te yé<sub>i</sub> [FOC kị<sub>j</sub>] [AGRS<sub>P</sub> NT<sub>j</sub> [AGRS<sub>S</sub> Fm] [TP [T Fn]] [AGRoP t'<sub>i</sub> [VP t<sub>i</sub> subonimí t<sub>j</sub> ]]]]

CH: < Te yé<sub>i</sub>, ... t'<sub>i</sub>, ... t<sub>i</sub> > < NT<sub>j</sub>, ... t<sub>j</sub> >

'What are you carrying?'

- b. Respondent: Indi ḱ - subonimí.  
(fish FOC NT carry-stat)
- b'. [CP Indii [FOC ḱ][AGRsP – [AGRs Fm]][TP [T Fn]] [AGRoP t'ᵢ [VP tᵢ subonimí tᵢ ]]]]  
CH: < Indii, ... t'ᵢ, ... tᵢ > < NTᵢ, ... tᵢ >  
'I'm carrying fish'.

We observe from the foregoing examples that the true subject in each of the sentences above is missing. We have indicated the missing subject here with a gap (-).

Egberipou and Williamson (1994:64) also observe that in Iẓon, the subject can be suppressed "in a subordinate clause when it will come in the main clause", as in:

- 38) - ịgbọ gbèin siín mọ, ọmịní bodọ.  
(NT cast-net throw finish COMP 3pl. come-HPF)  
'After they have finished fishing, they come home'.
- 39) - bódeí sè, iná yé tọdọ.  
(NT come-copl COMP mother thing cook-HPF)  
'When/after mother comes home, mother cooks'.

From the above examples, we observe that Subject-Verb agreement or Subject-Clitic agreement is systematically irrelevant in the grammar of Iẓon. In (35) - (39), it is apparent that Iẓon routinely allows the subject of finite or tensed clauses to be suppressed in the conversational style or in the subordinate clauses when they will be mentioned later in a matrix clause. In other words, phonetically inaudible categories can be licensed in the spec of AGRsP position of finite clauses where neither rich verb-agreement nor Subject-Clitic agreement provides an explanation for the absence of overt subjects.

Iẓon verbs are not inflected for agreement in the sense of Italian and Spanish. Nor does the language have a rich system of Subject-Clitic agreement in the sense of Ibibio and Degema. In other words, the functional head AGR in Iẓon is not audibly spelt out at the phonetic form level. The syntactic surroundings in Iẓon sentences do not provide enough clue as to why the subject of a finite or tensed clause can be suppressed in overt syntax. The content of the null subject in Iẓon is not recoverable from the syntactic environment.

Let us mention that the null subjects in (35) - (39) are not traces created by any known movement rule. The empty categories in question differ from traces. The null subject in each of the sentences from (35) - (39) is not case-governed by a strong AGR; hence, its identification is problematic. "In the case of a trace, the head-government provision of ECP imposes a formal licensing requirement and an obligatory presence of a c-commanding antecedent represents the identification requirement" (Harbert 1995:224).

### 3.2 The Nun Subject in Iẓon in the Context of the *Pro*-drop Debate

In the literature, two conditions have been suggested under which a language can be said to exhibit *pro*-drop. According to Rizzi (1986),

- *pro* is licensed under head-government (in Italian, for instance, AGRs governs the spec of AGRsP, and AGRs is the head of its projection, and
- the content of *pro* is recoverable through rich agreement specification.

The above requirements for the licensing of *pro* are summarised in the words of Harbert (1995:222), as follows: "the admissibility of *pro* in subject positions is related in some way to another property of those positions - the fact that they are typically involved in an agreement relation with the inflectional head".

From the data provided in (35) - (39) above, the missing subject in Iẓon cannot be licensed under head-government. The AGR system of Iẓon is grossly impoverished, and the content of *pro* is therefore not recoverable via agreement specification of any sort.

Based on the foregoing, the following questions need to be addressed:

- Must richness of agreement morphology be used as a necessary parameter for determining which languages can or cannot allow a subject pronoun of a finite or tensed clause to be omitted in overt syntax?
- Can the null subject in (35) - (39) be construed as a case of "null constant" in the sense of the "diary drop" phenomenon in English instead of *pro*-drop?
- If, on the other hand, the null subject in (35) - (39) is a case of *pro*-drop, what will be the mechanism for *pro*-identification in Iẓon in the absence of Subject-Verb or Subject-Clitic AGR paradigms?

Recently, there have been serious efforts to re-examine the theory of *pro*-drop based on facts emerging from different languages, particularly as regards richness of agreement paradigms.

Although it appears that *pro*-drop involves richness of verb-agreement morphology in some, some scholars have warned that this may not be a sufficient requirement for the licensing of *pro* in a language. Facts about a number of languages seem to nullify the argument that *pro*-drop is licensed only in a position where there are enough PGN features in the surrounding syntactic environment. *Pro*-drop licensing does not depend on inflectional richness. For instance, Harbert (1995:222) observes that "in non-*pro*-drop languages like English and French, *pro* is disallowed even when the particular agreement ending allows for unambiguous recovery of its content". To show that verb-agreement inflectional morphology is not a sufficient condition for the licensing of *pro*, let us compare the Italian examples in (2) above with their English equivalents in (40):

40)a. The boy comes.

V +3sg.AGR-sf

b. He comes.

V +3sg.AGR-sf

c.\*- comes.

NT V+3sg.AGR-sf

Even though there is an agreement marker in the verb **come** in (40), this agreement does not license *pro*. This is why (40c) is ungrammatical. But the equivalent of **comes** in Italian, which is **venga**, can allow the omission of its subject pronoun since the verb contains the relevant agreement suffix, as in (2c). Whereas the agreement marker in Italian can allow a null subject, the English one cannot. Hence, the two languages do not behave in the same way as far as the licensing of *pro* is concerned. The conclusion one can draw from the foregoing is that whether a language allows *pro* in the spec of AGRsP position of finite clauses or not is not wholly dependent upon verb-agreement paradigms. Hence, some other convincing reasons have to be sought for the licensing of *pro*-drop.

It has also been observed that Chinese and Japanese (which have defective or impoverished morphological paradigms) routinely allow null subjects in finite clauses (cf. Huang 1989, Jaeggli and Safir 1989, Harbert 1995, Eze 1995). In the grammar of Chinese or Japanese, verb agreement is consistently irrelevant, as we can see from the following Chinese sentences cited by Huang (1989) and Harbert (1995):

- 41) Zhangsan shuo [AGRsP – lai le]  
 (Zhangsan say NT come ASP)  
 'Zhangsan<sub>i</sub> said that he<sub>i</sub> would come'.
- 42) Zhangsan qi ma qi de [AGRsP – hen lei]  
 (Zhangsan ride horse ride till NT very tired)  
 'Zhangsan<sub>i</sub> rode the horse until he<sub>i</sub> was very tired'.

The null subject indicated by a gap (-) in (41) or (42) in the embedded clause is coindexed with the substantive subject (Zhangsan) in the matrix clause. The fact that emerges from the above examples is that subject omission is possible in Chinese, even though words in the language are not inflected.

The data in Iẓon are closely related to those in Chinese. If *pro*-drop simply translates as 'drop the subject pronoun', we can argue that the null subjects in (35) - (39) are cases of *pro*-drop. Hence, Iẓon is also a *pro*-drop language, even though there is no overt agreement morphology in the language.

Having argued that the null subjects in Iẓon are instances of *pro*-drop, we reject the analysis that they are cases of 'null constant' in the sense of 'diary drop' in English. Unlike diary drop, the null subjects in (35) - (39) are not restricted to "root clauses in which no element has been fronted" (Harbert 1995:230). Diary drop is pervasive in written styles in English, such as in personal diaries or short informal notes, as in:

- 43) - returned from Lagos to see mother, - leaving now for Aba; - might visit Jos from there. - hope to return home on Sunday morning. - miss you.

The gaps (-) indicate the positions from which a subject pronoun (in this case 1sg. or 1pl.) has been omitted. The missing subjects in (43) have no antecedents within their Governing Category. They rather pick up discourse-identification. That is to say the entity from which the missing subjects in (43) pick up their reference is located in discourse.



Having claimed that the null subject in Iẓon sentences of the type in (35) - (39) is *pro*, the next problem is to find out whether the sentences truly satisfy the condition for *pro* licensing.

If *pro* licensing is dependent upon richness of agreement morphology or strongly and lexically realised AGR, then the sentences in question fail to satisfy the condition. Facts from other languages, however, reveal that the licensing of a null subject is not solely based on agreement morphology. In fact, Harbert (1995:223) observes that richness of agreement morphology for a language.

"... must be characterised in terms of the overall richness of the whole paradigms, rather than particular endings... The apparent association between *pro*-drop and rich agreement results from the fact that languages in which INFL contains nominative case features tend strongly to spell out the full feature content of INFL in Phonological Form perhaps in consequence of the Visibility Condition".

He also states that "languages with rich agreement morphology may not opt to exploit identification through head-binding" (Harbert 1995:225). German, for instance, is a language with a rich system of verb-agreement, and yet does not license *pro* in the spec AGRsP position.

It is apparent that there is a problem if the licensing of null subject is to be accounted for solely from the point of view of rich system of verb-agreement. As an attempt to tackle the problem, Jaeggli and Safir (1989) suggest that it is not the richness of agreement morphology that necessarily causes a null subject to manifest in a finite clause, rather it depends on how 'morphologically uniform' the paradigms in a language are. Morphological uniformity, according to Jaeggli and Safir (1989), is defined thus:

44) *Morphological Uniformity*

An inflectional paradigm P in a language L is morphologically uniform iff P has either only underived inflectional forms or only derived inflectional forms.

Morphological uniformity means consistency in the choice of whatever parametric option is available to the speakers of a particular language. That is, the speakers might choose to fully inflect the verbs for all combinations of numbers, persons, tenses, and perhaps gender or to leave them completely uninflected. A partial selection of a particular parametric option is not healthy for the licensing of a null subject in finite clauses. In other words, languages which exhibit erratic morphological paradigms can never license argumental *pro*.

Following the definition of morphological uniformity above, we can argue that Italian and Spanish are morphologically uniform in the sense that they systematically and consistently have derived inflectional forms for all combinations of persons, numbers and tenses. In the same way, we can argue that Iẓon is morphologically uniform, since the language systematically and consistently has underived inflectional forms for all combinations of persons, numbers, gender and tenses. If *pro*-licensing is a function of morphological consistency, then finite clauses in Iẓon can allow their

subject pronouns to be suppressed. So, the licensing of *pro* in spec of AGRsP position in İzən is based on the fact of morphological uniformity, and not on a rich system of agreement paradigms.

Jaeggli and Sapir (1989) and Harbert (1995), however, argue that German is morphologically uniform (as we can see in the table below), and yet cannot license argumental *pro* in the spec of AGRsP position.

| Person | Number                                          |                          |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
|        | Singular                                        |                          |
| 1st    | ich komm-e 'I come'.                            | wir komm-en 'we come'.   |
| 2nd    | du komm-st 'you come'.                          | ihr komm-et 'you come'.  |
| 3rd    | er komm-t 'he comes'.<br>sie komm-t 'she comes' | sie komm-en 'they come'. |

The reason given as to why German cannot license *pro* is that the language exhibits what is known as the "verb second phenomenon"<sup>15</sup>.

Earlier on, we argued that the recoverability of the *phi*-feature content of *pro* (such as person, number, and perhaps gender) is accomplished via co-indexation with a sufficiently rich AGRs. *Pro*-identification for languages with a rich system of verb-agreement or Subject-Clitic agreement is accomplished through binding by the grammatical features on the licensing head. In the Italian- or Degema-type of language, AGRs is the licensing head.

Now, the potential problem to the theory of *pro*-drop is the identification mechanism for *pro* in a language with an impoverished system of agreement morphology. In Italian, the functional node AGR is strong, and therefore can serve as a 'controller' of a coindexed null subject. In İzən, the functional node AGR (if it exists) is weak, and therefore cannot control a null subject. Since there are languages in which a rich system of verb-agreement is systematically irrelevant for the licensing of *pro*, the mechanism for *pro*-identification must vary from language to language.

Like Chinese, İzən has no overt agreement to identify its null subject as *pro*. The functional head AGR is not spelt out in İzən even at PF. If the null subjects in examples (35) - (39) are regarded as cases of *pro*-drop, then there will be no agreement morphology to identify the subject. In this case, the mechanism for *pro*-identification in İzən cannot be sought within the syntactic surroundings of the null subject; rather the identification of *pro* in İzən must be sought elsewhere. In the conversational styles in (35) - (37), the identity of the null subject must be sought in the discourse, while in (38) and (39), the identity of the null subjects in the embedded clauses must be sought in the subject position of the matrix clause. In (38) and (39), the null subject in the embedded clause is obligatorily understood as coreferring with a matrix clause argument in the spec of AGRsP position. Since verbs in İzən have no overt inflectional morphology from which the content of *pro* is recoverable, it means that the controller for *pro* is in the discourse. So, *pro* in İzən requires discourse-identification.

The antecedent of the null subject in İzən, particularly the one found in conversational style, is accessible through a 'conceptual scanner'. What this means is

that whereas the grammar of Iẓon satisfies the condition for the licensing of *pro*, it does not satisfy the condition for *pro*-identification. The null subject in Iẓon makes a definite reference like the overt pronouns. It can, like an overt pronoun, refer to an entity in the non-linguistic context. In Iẓon, a number of pragmatic constraints operate causing the subject to delete.

Having identified the null subject in (35) - (39) above as *pro*, a question that one might ask is: does *pro* exhibit characteristics identical with those of another empty category in Iẓon?

We earlier said that *pro* is not created by any known movement operation. In other words, *pro* is an in-situ category. It has, however, been argued by Huang (1989) that *pro* and PRO may be derived in the same way. He argues that since the null subject found in Chinese and Japanese behaves very much like the abstract PRO, it may be wise to formulate a rule which takes care of PRO and the null subject in finite clauses. He calls the rule the Generalised Control Rule.

45a) *Generalized Control Rule*

A null-trace empty pronominal element is controlled in its control domain (if it has one).

b. Control Domain

X is a control domain for Y iff Y is the minimal category satisfying (i) and (ii) below:

(i) X is the lowest S or NP containing:

(a) Y, or

(b) the minimal maximal category containing Y

(ii) Y contains a SUBJECT' accessible to X.

Facts from Iẓon, however, reveal that *pro* is not the same as PRO, because of the differences in referential properties. PRO can make an independent or arbitrary reference, while *pro* cannot. *Pro* has a definite specific reference. Even though *pro* and PRO occur in the spec of AGRsP lacking overt AGR, the two categories are not the same. PRO occurs only in the spec of AGRsP position of a non-finite or infinitival clause, while *pro* occurs in the spec of AGRsP position of a finite or tensed clause.

If the two categories are the same in the sense that they both occur in the spec of AGRsP position of clauses without overt AGR, one has to explain why some other clauses in Iẓon, which also lack overt AGR, cannot allow null subjects. What emerges from the above is that it is necessary to specify the condition under which a null subject can be allowed. If this is not done, every sentence in Iẓon should have the option to allow *pro*, which will produce undesirable consequences.

From the data at our disposal, *pro* in Iẓon is optionally licensed in the spec of AGRsP in the conversational style or in the embedded clause if the subject which is coreferential with *pro* is to be mentioned in the matrix clause. PRO occurs only in an ungoverned position. The implication of our position is that the Generalised Control Rule by Huang (1989) is not necessary in Iẓon.

Earlier on, we said that it has often been claimed that *pro*-drop languages can optionally allow the subject of tensed or finite clauses to occur post-verbally. But from the data at our disposal it seems that this optional posting of the subject of a finite clause to the post-verbal position does not occur in Iẓon, as we can see below:

- 46)a. Ebieré b̀uru akí boyemi.  
 (Ebiere yam take come-prog)  
 'Ebiere is bringing yam'.  
 b. \*t<sub>i</sub> b̀uru Ebieré<sub>i</sub> akí boyemi.  
 c. \*t<sub>i</sub> b̀uru akí Ebieré<sub>i</sub> boyemi.  
 d. \*t<sub>i</sub> b̀uru akí boyemi Ebieré<sub>i</sub>

With the exception of (46a), all the other sentences above are ungrammatical due to the rightward movement of Ebieré from the subject position. The lesson we learn from the foregoing is that subject inversion of the type we witnessed in the Italian data in (22) and (23) is prohibited in Iẓon. Could it be that subject inversion is not a necessary requirement for *pro*-licensing in a language such as Iẓon?

#### 4. Conclusion

We have so far examined the behaviour of the missing subject in Iẓon. We have argued that the null subject in the constructions we examined is a non-trace empty category. The null subjects are not created by any known movement role. They are not PRO, because they occur in subject position of tensed or finite clauses, a position in which PRO cannot be found. Our contention is that if *pro*-drop simply translates as 'drop' the NP at the relevant position, then Iẓon can also be freely admitted into the league of *pro*-drop languages. From available data, we observed that the licensing of *pro*-drop in Iẓon is different from those in other well-known cases of *pro*-drop languages, such as Italian, Spanish, Ibibio and Degema. Whereas the occurrence of *pro* in these languages can be accounted for by certain overt morpho-syntactic manifestations of the surrounding grammatical units, the occurrence of the *pro* in Iẓon is accounted for by a purely independently motivated pragmatic factor. In Italian, Spanish, Ibibio and Degema, an overt pronominal element is dropped in the spec of AGRsP position if its content is unambiguously recoverable from the syntactic surroundings, but in Iẓon the same overt pronominal element is dropped in the same position if its content is unambiguously recoverable from the discourse surroundings.

Finally, we discovered that the subject inversion test is not crucial for the licensing of *pro* drop in Iẓon. It appears that *pro*-licensing in Iẓon is influenced by some semantic and discourse factors which have nothing to do with neither AGR paradigms nor subject inversion. It is most likely that subject inversion is not connected with *pro*-drop. The two phenomena might occur in a language (as in Italian and Spanish), but they are not causally connected.

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Notes

1. I am grateful to Professor Kay Williamson for drawing my attention to the existence of sentences in Iẓon without overt subjects. I thank her for urging me to examine the null subjects on a comparative basis, so as to see what specific modifications of the universal format for *pro*-drop can be triggered by the Iẓon data. I also thank Mr. A.G. Timitimi for checking the Iẓon data for accuracy.
2. The other two are the head-position parameter and the *wh*-parameter. The *wh*-parameter is concerned with whether the *wh*- must be obligatorily fronted or not, while the head-position parameter is concerned with the position where the head of a maximal projection occurs vis-à-vis other constituents within the same projection.
3. It has been reported that languages such as Chinese, Japanese and Korean routinely allow null subjects in the spec of AGRsP of finite clauses, in spite of the fact that they do not have AGR. Huang (1989) argues that the null subjects found in the spec of AGRsP of these languages can be accounted for through "generalised control theory". It is not clear whether one can describe the Chinese-type of null subject in the spec of AGRsP of finite clauses as truly *pro*.
4. Note that *pro* is not only licensed, but also must be identified. Its content must be recoverable from the syntactic environment.
5. The data for this paper are drawn from four main sources: Williamson (1965), Williamson and Timitimi (1983), Egberipou and Williamson (1994) and oral interview with Mr. A.O. Timitimi.
6. The minimalist program is a recent model of transformational generative grammar developed by Noam Chomsky. It grew directly and without radical break from Chomsky's (1991) work in which he argues that syntactic derivations are constrained by the "principle of economy of derivation". The major concern of the minimalist program is to describe the nature of Universal Grammar as well as to account for certain specific parametric variations of that system occasioned by investigations into Core Grammars (i.e. grammars of specific languages). The minimalist program proposes general principles of economy which require syntactic derivations to be minimal in cost. The minimalist program employs three major economy principles: "Shortest Move", "Procrastinate" and "Greed".
7. The study of *pro*-drop phenomenon in Romance languages has given rise to what is now referred to as the new comparative syntax.
8. In MP, however, government is no longer a crucial system of principles; hence, case assignment or feature specification is assumed to be a matter of a checking mechanism. For instance, NPs move to check their case features, while verbs move to activate finiteness (i.e. to check their finite features). Let us state, however, that nothing crucial depends on this view for our purpose.
9. The unity of the Verb-Tense-AGRs is not through affix hopping. The affix hopping rule of some earlier versions of transformational generative grammar has lost its favour in MP. In MP, it is assumed that all inflectional associations



- take place within the lexicon prior to the computational rigours of 'select', 'merger' and 'move'.
10. "Functional categories are said to be either 'strong' or 'weak' with respect to their visibility at the PF interface. 'Strong' AGR features are visible at PF if they are not checked off before interface. 'Weak' features are invisible" (Marantz 1995:367).
  11. Notice here that there is no difference between (13b) and (17b). This situation can give rise to ambiguity. One way to resolve the ambiguity is to retain the personal pronoun **eni** 'we' in the subject position even in the presence of the corresponding subject clitic. This is done in a situation where ambiguity might arise, and where context cannot provide enough clue for the unambiguous identification of the missing subject.
  12. Note that it is a rule of grammar that only constituents belonging to the same category can serve as co-conjuncts.
  13. The non-expression of the subject in the conversational style in Iẓon is in the true spirit of MP. A silent or phonetically inaudible constituent is minimal in cost. It requires least effort in satisfying a principle.
  14. **Fm** and **Fn** are mere abstract features of AGR and Tense, respectively. In MP, functional nodes, such as AGR, T, and NEG are neither associated with affixes nor with any phonetic content of any sort. Ns and Vs are projected from the lexicon fully inflected with inflectional affixes.
  15. In German, according to Jaeggli and Sapir (1989), Harbert (1995) and Eze (1995), the verb occurs last in an embedded clause with an overt complementizer, but obligatorily second in a matrix clause. In German, tense features are generated in COMP position. Hence, the verb has to move there in order to activate finiteness. The implication here is that the Tense-AGR features cannot occur together, since it is the unity of Tense-AGR features that licenses *pro* in the spec of AGRsP position. The consequence is that an identified argumental *pro* is prohibited in German. Adams (1987), however, relates the absence of *pro* in German to case directionality. We must state, however, that nothing crucial depends on this view for our purpose.

### Abbreviations/Symbols

|         |   |                             |
|---------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1pl.    | = | 1st Person Plural Pronoun   |
| 1sg.    | = | 1st Person Singular Pronoun |
| 2pl.    | = | 2nd Person Plural Pronoun   |
| 2sg.    | = | 2nd Person Singular Pronoun |
| 3pl.    | = | 3rd Person Plural Pronoun   |
| 3sg.    | = | 3rd Person Singular Pronoun |
| A-bound | = | Argument Bound              |
| A-free  | = | Argument Free               |
| Acc.    | = | Accusative Case             |



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|            |   |                                 |
|------------|---|---------------------------------|
| AGR or agr | = | Agreement                       |
| AGR.sf     | = | Agreement suffix                |
| AGRo       | = | Agreement of Object             |
| AGRoP      | = | Agreement of Object Projection  |
| AGRs       | = | Agreement of Subject            |
| AGRsP      | = | Agreement of Subject Projection |
| ATR        | = | Advanced Tongue Root            |
| c-command  | = | Constituent Command             |
| CH         | = | Chain                           |
| CL or cl   | = | Clitic                          |
| CP         | = | Complementizer Projection       |
| def-art    | = | Definite Article                |
| ECP        | = | Empty Category Principle        |
| fem        | = | Feminine                        |
| Fm         | = | Abstract Features of Agreement  |
| Fn         | = | Abstract Features of Tense      |
| FOC        | = | Focus                           |
| fut.       | = | Future                          |
| INFL       | = | Inflection                      |
| IP         | = | Inflection(al) Projection       |
| LOC-FOC    | = | Locative Focus                  |
| mas        | = | Masculine                       |
| MP         | = | Minimalist Program              |
| Nom        | = | Nominative Case                 |
| NP         | = | Noun Phrase                     |
| Ns         | = | Nouns                           |
| NT         | = | Null Subject                    |
| ∅          | = | Null Element                    |
| P&P        | = | Principles-and-Parameters       |
| PGN        | = | Person, Number, and Gender      |
| pr         | = | Preposition                     |
| HPF        | = | Habitual Perfect                |
| pst        | = | Past                            |
| sf         | = | Suffix                          |
| spec       | = | Specifier                       |
| STA        | = | Subject to ATR Harmony          |
| stat       | = | stative                         |
| T          | = | Tense                           |
| t          | = | Trace                           |
| TOP        | = | Topic                           |
| TP         | = | Tense Projection                |
| V          | = | Verb                            |
| Vs         | = | Verbs                           |

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# 51. The Pragmatics of Basic Register Tones in Igala

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Tone is a highly functional unit in the grammar of Igala. Much emphasis has been laid in existing literature on the relevance of this element of the grammar for lexical and syntactic distinctions. This paper pursues two goals: the first is to identify the pragmatics of register tones in Igala as a significant basic function of tone in tone languages; the second is to show that the knowledge of this pragmatic function facilitates the interpretation of register tones in Igala. The paper demonstrates that the high tone, the mid tone and the low tone signify objection, agreement, and resignation, respectively. The paper concludes that the pragmatics of the register tones is implicitly useful for the accurate interpretation of register tones in Igala. The research made use of investigator-based introspective judgment, as the researcher is a competent native speaker of Igala. Language samples were collected from the native speakers through direct personal contact.

## 1. Igala Tones: A General Overview

Some attention has been given to the study of Igala tones, the first detailed one being that of Ejeba (2009). Some others are Miachi and Armstrong (1986), Katamba (1989), Etu (1999), Omachonu (2000), Abutu (2003) and Mason and Nordman (n.d). It is established in the literature on tone phenomena that tone registers distinguish lexical and grammatical expressions in Igala (Katamba 1989, Ejeba 2009). Igala has three contrastive register tones: high, mid and low. Examples of the sequences of these lexical tones are given on Table 1 taken from Ejeba (2015).

The register tones have contour variants which also occur. Ejeba (2009:38) explores the limited distribution of the contours by which they are classified as variants of the registers by stating that “in the environment after a high tone in VCV syllable frames, the low tone is realised as a falling tone, with only a few exceptions.” It further states that “The falling tone is thus in complementary distribution with the low tone in this environment.” The rising tone also occurs at first position of words in complementary distribution with the high tone.

**Table 1:** *Tone Distribution in VCV Frames*

| VCV Frame:     | awo           | akpa     | ak <sup>w</sup> u       | ala     | k         | og <sup>w</sup> u | Tone Patterns |
|----------------|---------------|----------|-------------------------|---------|-----------|-------------------|---------------|
| List of Words: | ‘guinea fowl’ | ‘cloud’  | <sup>w</sup> u<br>‘cry’ | ‘sheep’ | ‘money’   | ú<br>‘twenty’     | H/H           |
|                | ‘increase’    | ‘killer’ | u<br>‘butcher’          | -       | ‘husband’ | u<br>‘war’        | H/M           |

|  |        |          |                     |          |             |                 |     |
|--|--------|----------|---------------------|----------|-------------|-----------------|-----|
|  | -      | -        | -                   | -        | -           | u<br>'medicine' | H/L |
|  | 'slap' | 'insect' | ú<br>'a story'      | 'tent'   | -           | ú<br>'twin'     | L/H |
|  | 'comb' | -        | u<br>'a wise child' | 'island' | -           | -               | L/M |
|  | 'star' | 'Muslim' | u<br>'fence'        | -        | 'millipede' | -               | L/L |

The downstepped high tone also occurs in Igala. This is a downtrend that results when the sequence of a high tone in word-final position (T1) of a word occurs before a word-initial low tone (T2) of another word with a word-final high tone. The tonal change at the word juncture usually triggers the downtrend in the word-final high tone of the second word to a downstepped high tone, as examples under (1) illustrate:

| <i>Igala Expression</i>      | <i>Basic Tone Pattern</i> | <i>Assimilated Form</i> | <i>Output Tone Pattern</i> |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| (1) a. ú<br>'father's house' | H/H#L/H                   | ú                       | H/H/ H                     |
| b. u ú<br>'father's lodge'   | L/H#L/H                   | ú                       | L/H/ H                     |

The demonstration in (1) shows that the final H tone takes a down trend when a prior tonal process changes the preceding L tone to H.

An extra high tone also occurs in the account of negation in Igala. As Ejeba (2009:73) states, "The morphosyntactic specification for negation in Igala requires the pronominal clitic to be on the extra high tone." The examples in (2) illustrate the extra high tone that expresses negation:

- (2) a. u= =  
1SgSCL.NEG=come=NE  
'I did not/will not come'
- b. = ú =  
3PISCL.NEG=come house=NE  
'They did not/will not come home'
- c. u=u =  
Polu=SCL.NEG eat food=NE  
'Paul did not/will not eat'





in Igala, such as *òmi* 'I', *ùwe* 'you (sg)' and the other personal pronouns do not actually have meaning content except in the context of utterances. Deixes are observed cross-linguistically to be easily and usually available in meaning more than is said. This is usually the case in honorific pronoun usages of the second person plural as a mark of respect in singular reference in some languages (Trask 1997).

The present work identifies the basic register tones as signifying various contextual meanings in Igala, depending on concrete and dynamic social relations established in specific speech situations. This work shall however not bother to go into establishing the various situations in which one shade of meaning or the other is appropriate. Suffice it that the demonstration helps to establish the existence of pragmatic functions generally for the register tones in Igala. Table 2 shows the approximate range of pragmatic tones in Igala.

**Table 2:** *Approximate Range of Igala Pragmatic Tones*

| Tone Register | Possible Pragmatic Implicatures                                                                                                                  |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|               | regret, disagreement, utmost agreement, surprise, excitement, disappointment, disgust, etc.                                                      |
|               | agreement, mockery, insincerity, disagreement, mild disappointment, etc.                                                                         |
|               | mild agreement, deference, despair, sympathy, resignation, doubt, displeasure, calling one's attention privately, pensiveness, mild threat, etc. |

It can be observed from Table 2 that in spite of the discreet segment on which the particular tone occurs in Igala, the pragmatic implicature remains stable. This suggests a sort of *pragmatic levelling* based on tone rather than the discreet segments. This is unlike the lexical application of tones to segments, for instance, in which differentiation is obtained based on the significant contribution of formal and tonal morphemes. The range of contextual meanings associated with the pragmatics of tones is observed to be tone-based. That they occur on a range of certain vowels and nasals is merely a realisation phenomenon. Observe the various segmental/phonetic realisations of the Igala pragmatic tones in Table 3.

**Table 3:** *Approximate Pragmatic Implicatures of Register Tones*

| Pragmatic Tone ⇒<br>Formal Segment ↓ | Low         | Mid       | High      |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
|                                      | -           | Agreement | -         |
|                                      | -           | Agreement | -         |
|                                      | Resignation | Agreement | -         |
|                                      | -           | -         | Objection |
|                                      | -           | -         | -         |

|   |             |           |           |
|---|-------------|-----------|-----------|
|   | -           | Agreement | Objection |
| u | -           | -         | -         |
|   | Resignation | Agreement | Objection |

The various vowels and the bilabial nasal are not mere toned segments but expressions which function as pragmatic words in Igala, easily utilized by speakers in meaning more than what is said. In fact, it is interesting to note that imprecative forms are also established in Igala based on the various tones. Some imprecative forms make use of CVC onomatopoeic syllables with the vowel element being either u or , which are otherwise not utilized in the pragmatics of tones. I show the imprecative form for OBJECTION in (4), agreement in (5) and resignation in (6):

- (4) (mock anger)  
nonsense.OBJECT
- (5) (mock agreement)  
nonsense.AGREE
- (6) (mock resignation)  
nonsense.RESIGN

#### **4 Pragmatics of Register Tones as a Means of Tone Recognition**

The recognition of the tone features above is an interesting pragmatic system in Igala. The phonetic quality of these pragmatic tones themselves is a means of accurate perception and discrimination of the register tones in Igala language. Most important to the recognition of tones, the observation of these correlations in this study facilitates a better approach to this highly functional micro structure in linguistic analysis. The pragmatic context of the register tones is useful for the perception and production of the distinctive phonetic qualities of the tone element. This approach makes the process of tone perception and production in Igala quite easier. As demonstrated in Igala data on Tables 2 and 3, the segments on which approximate pragmatic interpretations are derived are not necessarily uniform, even though the tones are. This buttresses the fact that varied segmental specification of the uniform pragmatic value of particular tones is a mere phonetic realisation rule in Igala. The conveyer of the pragmatic contexts is thus tone. The various approximate pragmatic applications of the register tones are presented on Table 4 following: the high tone marks objection, the mid tone marks agreement and the low tone, resignation.

**Table 4:** *Approximate Pragmatic Acts of Register Tones*

| <b>Tone</b> | <b>Approximate Pragmatic Act</b> | <b>Gloss</b> |
|-------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| High        | OBJECT                           | ‘No!’        |
| Mid         | AGREE                            | ‘Yes’        |
| Low         | RESIGN                           | ‘Alright’    |

## 5 Conclusion

This paper took an overview tones in Igala and emphasized the pragmatic implicatures of the register tones. The work proceeded to observe the correlations of the pragmatics of the basic register tones with their perception. The generalisation in this work isolates the high tone as marker of objection, the mid as marker of agreement and the low tone as marker of resignation. This study thus does not only bring attention to the pragmatics of tones generally and specifically of the register tones in Igala languages; it further brings attention to the utility of these pragmatic functions as efficient in aiding the memory of the learner of tone, for discriminating the tones on perceptual grounds by associating the tone hearing activity to these broad pragmatic interpretations. This paper demonstrates that the process of tone perception in Igala becomes easier, by associating the tone hearing activity to the broad pragmatic interpretations.

*The following are some of the abbreviations used in this paper:* AGREE (agreement), AUX (auxiliary), CL (clitic), CR (complementizer/relativizer clitic), H (high tone), IND (indicative), L (low tone), M (mid tone), NE (negative enclitic), NEG (negative), O (object), OBJECT (objection), ONOM (onomatopoeic word), P (pronoun), PL (plural), REL (relativizer), RESIGN (resignation), S (subject), Sg (singular), VCV (vowel-consonant-vowel syllable structure), 1 (first person), 3 (third person), = (clitic boundary), # (word boundary), / (segment boundary), [ ] (phonetic transcription), (high tone), (low tone), (extra high tone), (downstepped high tone) and . (one-to-many metalanguage elements boundary).

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**T**he book is a commemorative volume. It is the 12th edition in the *Nigerian Linguists Festschrift Series* devoted to Professor (Mrs.) Appolonia Uzoaku Okwudishu. The majority of the papers in this volume were selected from the presentations at the 27th Annual Conference of the Linguistic Association of Nigerian (CLAN) which was held at the Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria, and the 26th CLAN which was held at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

The title of this book derives from the theme of the 27th CLAN, which is “Language Endangerment: Globalisation and the Fate of Minority Languages in Nigeria”. A sizeable number of the papers here address the major theme of the conference, while the balance address various aspects of Nigerian linguistics, languages, communication, and literature. The book contains 51 papers ranging from sociolinguistics through applied linguistics to formal areas of linguistics which include phonology, morphology and syntax of Nigerian languages. Papers on language endangerment and language revitalisation strategies for safeguarding the vanishing indigenous tongues of Nigeria took a centre stage in the book.

The book is an important reference material in various aspects of language and linguistic studies in Nigeria, and therefore generously recommended to all who are interested to learn more about the current state of research in Nigerian linguistics.

